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ONE IS NONE AND TWO IS ONE:
DEVELOPMENT FROM ABOVE AND BELOW
IN NORTH-CENTRAL PANAMÁ

By

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This work is dedicated to
the memory of
Graciela Isabel Adames and *Manuel Dolores Joly*
who gave me their lives,
and to the
Naturales, Playeros, and Interioranos
of the *Costa Abajo*
who incorporated me into their lives.

PREFACE

The proverb "One is none and two is one" in the title of this work illustrates several points. First, it incorporates the sociolinguistic component of the ethnography, both as theory and as method. Theoretically, I agree with the definition of ethnography as an inscription of social discourse, that is, a record of the ethnographer's personal experience in conversing analytically with other humans about their lives (Geertz 1973: 13). When as an anthropologist I assume the role of an activist and participant observer (Elmendorf 1976:4, 7-8) in the events of other humans, they are not subjects of study but fellow members of our species who have knowledge and experiences to share with me and with whom I can argue, discuss, and converse rationally about our behavior in "a process of mutual learning" (Freire 1971).

In talking about their production for subsistence and marketing, as well as in talking about all other aspects of their lives, the human groups in the *Costa Abajo* (Lower Coast) or north-central Panamá, who are Spanish speakers, frequently use proverbs or sayings that "take us into the heart of that of which they are the interpretation" (Geertz 1973:18). These speech acts give us empirical evidence that these humans make rational and value judgements about themselves and events in their lives. On the basis of their complementary differences, therefore, the emic (to mean what people say and do) and the etic (to mean the theoretical and methodological tools) approaches in anthropology form a symbiotic union in this work in an effort to avoid their weaknesses. Both provide answers.

As stated by that great role model, anthropologist Ruth Benedict, "The trouble with life isn't that there is no answer, it's that there are so many answers. . . . By turns their answers fit my needs" (Mead 1974:2).

The use of proverbs to reflect actions in words is methodologically consistent with the technique of "event analysis," which was one of the tools in my ethnographic kit. Event analysis is the "tracing of interconnections of behavior in time and space and in relation to the conditions of the situation" (Arensberg and Kimball 1972:224; Kimball and Pearsall 1955; Kimball and Partridge 1979:94). Behavior interconnections are units of interaction within a systemic network. Verbal behavior is a form of interaction which converts the event into a "speech event" when the "activity or aspects of the activity are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech" (Hymes 1972:56; 1974:52). The norm or rule governing the use of a proverb as a speech act in the Lower Coast is to incorporate it as an additional statement that conveys further clarifications and/or interpretation of what is occurring or what is being said. Hence, I am following this rule by incorporating a proverb in the title of this dissertation to clarify and/or interpret the events being described and analyzed.

The proverb "One is none and two is one" clarifies and interprets the major analyses of this work as follows: The proverb is used to describe the principle of interdependence, that is, "a union to raise the power of action above what it would be were the units to remain apart" (Hawley 1968:331-332). This meaning applies to this work not only in the symbiosis of the emic and the etic, but also in the fact that the major variables being described and analyzed only make sense as interdependent units within a system.

First, the development process cannot be effective unless planners and programmers of bureaucratic systems "from above" take into account the indigenous community development systems "from below" of the peoples intended to be the so-called "targets" or "beneficiaries" of the plans and programs. Secondly, the three major human groups in the Lower Coast--*Naturales*, *Playeros*, and *Interioranos*--are interdependent on each other in their systems of relations. Third, there is interdependence between the production and marketing of agricultural products and the community development systems along the Rio Indio, the river system of the Lower Coast that was selected for intensive study. The establishment, expansion, and function of these community development systems in Rio Indio has been greatly influenced by the marketing of cash products in this century during "times of value," the phrase used in the regional dialect to refer to a series of cash booms. Moreover, the community development systems of these three human groups are related to social and economic forces on the Isthmus since Spanish colonialism to the present.

The proverb "One is none and two is one" also applies to the support received from numerous persons and institutions. First, the writing of this dissertation would not have been possible without the intellectual guidance and moral encouragement of my doctoral committee: Drs. Solon T. Kimball, Chairperson; Allan F. Burns, Anthony Oliver-Smith, and Anita Spring as anthropologists; and Louis A. Paganini as cultural geographer. Dr. Kimball, in particular, has kindly directed me through my graduate studies since my first arrival from Panamá to the University of Florida that cold winter quarter of 1976, and was a patient and excellent tutor in the writing of this work.

During the graduate years of the Master's and Ph.D. programs at the University of Florida, I appreciate more than they realize the teachings

and support of faculty, staff, and fellow students. In particular, I am grateful to Dr. Charles Wagley and his Tropical South America research program that made possible under a 3-month summer grant in 1977 the preliminary survey in Panamá for the purpose of selecting a site for later dissertation research.

The 19 months of research for this dissertation, from August 1978 through February 1980, were sponsored by an Inter-American Foundation Learning Fellowship for Social Change in Latin America and the Caribbean. IAF not only provided funds for the research, but also intellectual guidance through its unique program of conferences to evaluate and advise through the peer group of fellows, the professors in the Screening Committee, and members of the IAF staff. I found most beneficial the interdisciplinary advice received from the following members of the IAF Screening Committee: sociologist Alejandro Portes; economist William Glade; agricultural economist William Thiesenhusen; and anthropologists Laura Nader, Charles Wagley, and Johannes Wilbert. I also appreciate the interest in my work shown during their visit to Panamá in October-November 1979 by IAF Director and Representative for Mexico, Central America, and Panamá, Ms. Sally W. Yudelman and Ms. Patricia Haggerty, respectively. Most of all, I am thankful for the care-taking role of IAF assumed by Fellowship Officer Elizabeth Veatch and General Services Officer Melvin Asterken.

In Panamá, the research was supported by institutional affiliation with the *Dirección del Patrimonio Histórico, Instituto Nacional de Cultura*; the *Universidad Santa María la Antigua*; the *Vicariato Apostólico del Darién*; and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. As with any institution, their value lies in their personnel. At the Directorate of Historical Patrimony of the National Institute of Culture, I am particularly indebted

to Dra. Reina Torres de Araúz, Director, for authorizing the research under Agreement Number 04 of November 6, 1978; to Dra. Marcia A. de Arosemena, Sub-Director and Chief of Scientific Investigations, who during the preliminary survey recommended the need to study Afro-American and mestizo human groups in the Caribbean side of the Isthmus; and to Prof. Marcela Camargo, Chief of the *Museo del Hombre Panameño*, who directed and coordinated all the facets of the travelling exhibit of artifacts and photographs entitled "Those who already conquered the Atlantic: *Naturales* and *Playeros* of the *Costa Abajo*," to inform the Panamanian public about preliminary results of the research and at the same time commemorate the third anniversary of the Museum, December 1979 through February 1980. At the Catholic University *Santa María la Antigua*, advice and guidance were always generously given by Dr. Roberto De la Guardia, Historian at the Office of Humanities; and Prof. Carlos Castro, Director of the School of Sociology. I am grateful to Monsignor Jesús Serrano, Bishop of Colón and Apostolic Vicar of Darién, who during the preliminary survey suggested the Lower Coast as an area for research. The Claretian missionaries of the Vicarate introduced me to the *Naturales* of Rio Indio during the preliminary survey; later during the research, they provided support at the missionary centers in the Lower Coast and engaged me in stimulating discussions about social issues, particularly the Reverends Luis Gonzalo Mateo, José María Morillo, Celestino Sainz, and Nicolás Delgado. At the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, support and advice were kindly given by archeologists Olga Linares and Richard Cooke of the Section of Human Ecology; librarian Alcira Mejía; botanist Robert Dressler; and ichthyologist Ira Rubinoff, Director of STRI.

Professors at the national University of Panamá also cooperated with the research. I appreciate the historical advice given by Dr. Alfredo Castellero Calvo, of the School of Geography and History, Faculty of Humanities. At the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Pharmacy, Dr. Richard Goodyear, of Marine Biology; and Prof. Mireya Correa, of Botany, kindly identified ichthyological and botanical specimens; and Drs. Tomás Arias and Mahabir Gupta, of the Laboratory of Specialized Analysis, conducted chemical analyses of botanical specimens. At the Department of Artistic Expressions, Prof. Manuel De la Rosa, of Drama and Theater, accepted my suggestion to participate in joint observations of the *Congo* ritual play of the Afro-American *Playeros*. Professors Raquel De León and Alberto McKay, of the School of Geography and History, helped to disseminate preliminary results of the research to the Panamanian public, by their kind invitation to lecture to the students of geography at the university.

For allowing me to make voluntary suggestions to their plans and letting me practice the role of the applied anthropologist, I express my appreciation to personnel at the School of Agronomy of the University of Panamá, the University of Delaware Title XII coordinators, and the mission in Panamá of the United States Agency for International Development.

Extensive kinship and friendship systems in Panamá and in the United States, too numerous to name, allowed me to survive during graduate school and the research by giving me unrestricted access to materials, space, services, and affection. They know who they are and how freely they gave to me, making the proverb "One is none and two is one" particularly applicable in their case.

There are no appropriate words, however, to express my gratitude to the *Naturales*, *Playeros*, and *Interioranos* of the *Costa Abajo* who became my

teachers, socializing me as they do with their children by letting me observe and participate in their activities. They transformed me from a *vidajena* (busybody or snooper, the nickname by which I would introduce myself initially) into a member of their communities, giving me nicknames and terms of address of their own: *vieja de monte* (old woman of the woods), *macha rulum pago* and *macha nucha* (lightning female and night female, in the Congo ritual-play language), and *comadre* (comother). There was no greater satisfaction for me than the way that they made me feel that "As I live here, I eat here," the proverb that they use to express the sharing of food, which is the most significant social relation among kin and friends. I owe my life in Rio Indio, in particular, to Norma, Máxima, and Benita, the leading females in the households where I ate and lived.

Before proceeding on with the chapters that follow, the reader may wish to take a look first at Appendix I which describes the initial survey in 1977 and the decision-making process in selecting the Rio Indio of the Lower Coast as the area for research. This digression will provide a better perspective in understanding the position of an anthropologist doing research among people in her own country.

The organization of the dissertation is as follows. The first chapter explains the problem addressed in this work and the theoretical and methodological framework. "Development from below" takes precedence here over "development from above." Therefore, the ethnic identity and the community development systems of the *Naturales*, *Playeros*, and *Interiores* are described and analyzed next. The identity of the *Naturales* and their system of *principales* is described and analyzed in Chapter II, and exemplified in Chapter III by the case history of the *principales* of the settlement of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio. The Afro-American identity of the

Playeros is treated in Chapter IV, mainly through their participation in the events of the ritual "Play of the *Congos*." The political and economic preeminence of the *Playeros* in the Lower Coast is exemplified in Chapter V by the case history of the *Playero pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio. The identity and the migration of the *Interioranos* is covered in Chapter VI. The encounter of the *Interioranos* with *Naturales* and *Playeros* is illustrated in Chapter VII with specific cases of their system of relations. A specific comparison between the preceding indigenous systems of community development and plans developed by outsiders for the Rio Indio is presented in Chapter VIII by the case of the planning process of the University of Panamá and the University of Delaware in submitting a Title XII proposal to the mission in Panamá of the United States Agency for International Development. This case also illustrates the role of the applied anthropologist in serving as a mediator and interpreter of the socio-cultural systems and making practical suggestions for program effectiveness and cost savings. General conclusions are made in Chapter IX.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council
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Chairperson: Solon T. Kimball
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This dissertation evaluates the development process in its two major dimensions; namely, planning and programming for "development from above" by bureaucratic systems and the "development from below" of indigenous socio-cultural systems in their process of community development. In this evaluation, the following theoretical formulations served as an operational mode or a guiding methodology: regional analysis, community study, event analysis, sociolinguistics, ethnohistory, ritual and symbolism, human ecology, and development. The focus is not that of ethnographic detail presented in a simply descriptive manner and serving only to exemplify theories as is the case in contemporary circles in academic anthropology. Instead, the indigenous systems of community development "from below" of the *Naturales*, the *Playeros*, and the *Interioranos*, as well as the case of development planning "from above" by the University of Panamá, the University of Delaware, and the United States Agency for International Development, are described in full ethnographic detail to correct the simplistic view given in feasibility studies for development plans in regards to these human groups in the *Costa Abajo* (Lower Coast) of north-central Panamá. Most development feasibility studies and plans list the human groups as a

"resource," but there is no indication whatsoever of why or how the human groups are a resource other than they represent a demographic factor displaying certain characteristics with regard to natural growth, mortality, density, health, sanitation, and education. The community development systems of the aforementioned three groups are described and analyzed in order to convey an idea of what these human groups can offer to the development process in terms of their own ways of organizing themselves, of doing things, of responding to external and internal influences, trends, and conflicts. These community development systems reflect the responses of these peoples to economic and political forces operating in Panamá since the Spanish colonial period to the present, and their own accomplishments are strategies in recovering or capturing for themselves part of those resources that have been historically centralized in the transisthmian urban center and the Pacific lowlands of the central and western provinces of Panamá.

The identity of the three groups, as traced from oral history and participation in ritual and other events, indicates that the *Naturales* are the people historically known as the *Cholos de las montañas de Coclé o Penonomé* (acculturated Indians from the mountains of Coclé or Penonomé); the *Playeros* are Hispanic Afro-Americans; and the migrant *Interioranos* are the Hispanic cattle-raising people of the Pacific lowlands of Panamá. The three groups are described and analyzed in terms of their systems of relations with each other and with other peoples and institutions in the Isthmus, as inferred from the settlements along the Rio Indio, one of the major river systems in the Lower Coast.

A specific example of the development planning process "from above" is provided in the analysis of the proposal by the School of Agronomy of

the University of Panamá and the University of Delaware in a joint Title XII program proposal submitted to the United States Agency for International Development. This case also illustrates the role of the applied anthropologist in serving as a mediator or interpreter of socio-cultural systems in order to increase program effectiveness and cost savings for the so-called "targets" or "beneficiaries." Other implications of "development from below" for "development from above" are presented in terms of national programs and policies for the peoples of the Lower Coast.

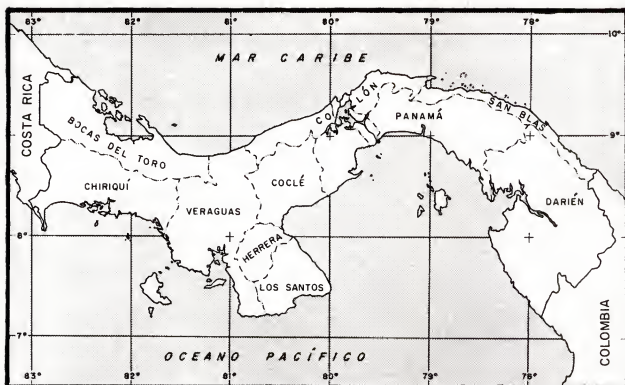
CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM

"Development from Above" versus "Development from Below"

In his return speech in Panamá after signing the Torrijos-Carter Treaty in Washington, D.C., in 1977, General Omar Torrijos stated that, since the problem of sovereignty of the canal had been settled, Panamá could now concentrate its efforts on other endeavors such as the "Conquest of the Atlantic" (Dominical-La República 1977:7C).¹ In this case "conquest" means a regional program of socio-economic development for which plans have already been written by national and international agencies (Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977; Chen et al. 1977; Dirección de Planificación y Coordinación Regional 1979). These plans are inherently deficient because they do not take into account the existing patterns of life of the different human groups in the Atlantic slope. They reflect concern for the people only insofar as:

1. There are people residing in areas where there are valuable natural resources such as copper and hardwoods that can be extracted to increase the national government income (Chen et al. 1977; Dirección de Planificación y Coordinación Regional 1979).

2. The lives of the people indicate the absence of such things as health, education, university-designed agricultural techniques, sanitary facilities, potable water, urban-style housing, and roads (Chen et al.



Map 1.0 Political Map of the Republic of Panamá

1977; Dirección de Planificación y Coordinación Regional 1979).

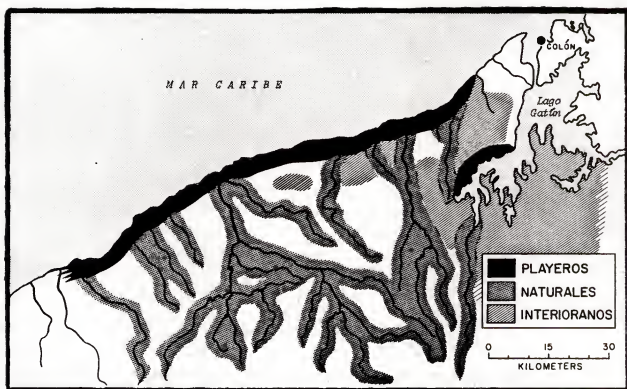
3. The people could be encouraged to take loans to increase cattle production for urban consumption and exportation (Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977), or taxed for the production of export cash crops like coffee (Consejo Municipal del Distrito de Chagres 1979).

The planners do not understand the significance of indigenous systems of development, the dynamics of socio-economic mobility, or the manner in which the goals of the national government and the aspirations of the people can be brought together in a constructive effort. It is a problem of what David Pitt (1976 a, b) has defined as "development from above" versus "development from below." The plans and programs designed and introduced by national and international bureaucracies are "development from above." This type of development is usually defined as increases in per capita production and consumption at the national level. It is usually attempted by large-scale capital projects that proletarianize the population in salaried employment that can be measured by per capita formulas. But the peoples who are the targets of such development, or who happen to reside at the sites where the projects will be located, may have different ideas, in different times, spaces, and contexts about their goals in life, involving status, power, identity, wealth, and quality of life. Their goals are "development from below" defined according to criteria that are not necessarily quantifiable in terms of per capita formulas. In some cases, this type of "development from below" may imply capturing or recovering part of the economic resources that are often centralized elsewhere. These captured resources, however, may be used according to local standards that do not necessarily meet national and international criteria of socio-economic development. This type of "development from below" is

carried on by villages, or families, or individuals who achieve the distinctive characteristics of development according to local standards. They often go unrecognized and are regarded as insignificant or unimportant in development planning (Pitt 1976 a, b).

This dissertation addresses this problem by describing three different systems of socio-economic mobility, whereby three different groups of people achieve what they regard as improvements in their way of life through their own efforts and by enlisting the assistance of outside agencies. The main focus will be on the contrast between the *Naturales* (indigenous people) and the *Playeros* (people of the beach) in the Rio Indio, one of the major rivers in the Atlantic region of the *Costa Abajo* (Lower Coast) in north-central Panamá (See Map 1.1). In addition, a third human group, the *Interioranos* (people from the Pacific interior) will be presented in reference to their migratory tactics into the Lower Coast and how they affect the first two groups. In the presentation and analysis of the data, it is important to clarify that each of these groups has its own system of socio-economic mobility. At times they converge in symbiotic relations, at other times they are antagonistic to each other. Each of these systems will be presented and analyzed in separate chapters. (See Map 1.2 for the relative spatial distribution of these three groups of people.)

In describing the different systems of socio-economic mobility of these three human groups, criteria recognized by the people themselves will be used as well as theoretical and methodological approaches.



Map 1.2 Relative Spatial Distribution of *Playeros*, *Naturales*, and *Interiores* in the Lower Coast.

The Theoretical Approaches

In this dissertation no new anthropological theory is proposed, nor an issue taken with any theoretical stance. Rather, certain theoretical approaches have been used as methodological tools or guidelines in researching, analyzing, and presenting the data. In other words, a constellation of theoretical approaches has been the operational mode within the context of accumulation and presentation of the data. The cases here presented are the pictures within a theoretical frame that includes regional analysis, community study, event analysis, sociolinguistics, ethnohistory, ritual and symbolism, human ecology, and development. There is no hierarchical ranking or preference for any of these approaches as being more powerful than others in explaining human socio-cultural phenomena. Rather, the complexity of human nature calls for the blending of various approaches if anthropology is to retain its holistic perspective.

The constellation of theoretical approaches that were found useful in the research will be explained. The reader must bear in mind, however, that the orientation has been toward the application of theoretical approaches in conducting the research and organizing the data in writing. In turn, the data were applied to make suggestions in the planning of an agricultural project for the Rio Indio that was proposed by the University of Panamá and the University of Delaware. These suggestions and other implications for policies and programs are covered in the last two chapters.

Regional Analysis

The concern with regional analyses arose in Panamá with the creation of the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy in the late 1960s. The

structural organization of this ministry includes a Directorate of Regional Planning and Coordination. The main objective of doing regional planning and coordination has been to incorporate the various sections of the national territory into a centralized economic policy that seeks to diversify the sources of national income and reduce dependency on the canal and its international trade. The regional analyses and plans that have been done under this economic policy have catalogued phenomena that are studied and related simply because they converge within a given area to affect the economy. The traits catalogued in these analyses have been compiled from bibliographic data, quick field surveys and questionnaires, and statistical data (Gobierno Nacional-Organización de Estados Americanos 1976; Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977; Dirección de Planificación y Coordinación Regional 1979; Ministerio de Planificación y Política Económica-Universidad de Panamá, Facultad de Agronomía 1979).

In anthropology, the cataloguing of traits in regional analysis arose with theories of diffusion, migration, or both, in seeking to explain the similarities and differences of cultures. The German *Kulturkreis* school emphasized migration and one of its main figures was the museum curator Fritz Graebner (1877-1934) who was concerned with classification of material culture for meaningful exhibitions (Waal Malefijt 1974:160-180). In the United States, the "culture area" concept was largely based upon diffusion and was also concerned with museum displays of American Indians according to geographical categories (Waal Malefijt 1974:174). The two principal exponents in the United States of the "culture area" concept were Clark Wissler (1870-1947) and Alfred Kroeber (1876-1960). Wissler's "food areas" of Indians in North and South America and the Caribbean "took subsistence as the most basic factor, not only because it influenced other parts of

culture, but also because it was necessarily related to environmental conditions" (Waal Malefijt 1974:174]. Kroeber proposed "typical traits" based on statistical correlations to delineate cultural and natural areas of native North America (Waal Malefijt 1974:176; Kroeber 1947). The best example of a survey of cultural traits in Panamá and Central America is found in Richard Adams' *Cultural Surveys of Panama-Nicaragua-Guatemala-El Salvador-Honduras* (Adams 1976).²

Although useful in tracing general patterns and configurations, an inherent limitation of cultural surveys and trait inventories is that they are essentially descriptive and do not proceed to "the analysis of an interacting system" (Vance 1968:380). To overcome this limitation, several anthropologists have formulated interacting approaches in areal analyses. By integrating socio-cultural and ecological variables in areal studies, Julian Steward (1955) proposed linear cause-to-effect sequences. While Steward (1955) showed how subsistence activities in a given area affect social organization through time, Arensberg proposed that traditional subsistence, social organization, and values persist and endure through inherited custom in some European and related Old World peoples (Arensberg and Kimball 1972:74-116). Using marketing systems as mechanisms of social articulation in large geographical area, Sidney Mintz (1959) proposed that horizontal and vertical links can be traced at various levels of organization of increasing or decreasing complexity. In fact, marketing or economic systems of exchange have been used by several anthropologists in regional analyses. Some recent regional analyses of contemporary marketing and economic systems include those compiled by Cook and Diskin (1976) for the Oaxaca area of Mexico, the collection by Carol Smith (1976 a) that incorporates central place theories adapted from geography in anthropological

studies of various social systems, and Oliver-Smith (1977) of the process of reestablishing a regional marketing system after an earthquake in a Peruvian Andean valley.

Variables other than marketing or economic exchange have been used singly or in sets to show articulatory and integrative systems of social relations over large geographical areas. Jean Jackson (1976:65-73) combined multilingualism and marriage to demonstrate a network system among various groups of people in the northwest Amazon. Skinner (1976:327-364) combined trading, the specialization of human talents, and kinship to show how particular localities in late imperial China exported specific occupational skills to other areas in systems of social mobility over large geographical areas.

Actually, the criteria or variables selected to analyze interactions or systems of relations in a geographical context will determine the nature and extension of the system in space and time. Uzzell (1980) has argued that the greater the number of variables used in an analysis, the more kinds of interactions there will be, making it more complex and complicated to define the regional context. Furthermore, Uzzell (1980) considers that such complexity is particularly evident if variables like wealth, power, and information are taken into account. Analyses using these variables in effect show that not all systems of relations form integrative, unifying entities. Contrasting or conflicting relations in systems of domination and dependency have been analyzed in *Regions of Refuge* by the Mexican anthropologist Aguirre Beltrán (1967/1979) and the U. S. anthropologist Richard Adams (1970).

Domination and dependency as analyzed by the latter two anthropologists and a score of other social scientists like Cardoso and Faletto

(1979) are here taken as proven facts in the history and development of Panamá, as has occurred in the rest of the Americas and elsewhere. Theories of dependency and domination, however, are often used by scholars to portray negative or condescending attitudes whereby people are viewed as poor, helpless, and without hope. This undermines the value of human dignity and obviates the fact that most people do not resign themselves to their fate but continue in one way or another to avoid domination and dependency. Even if such efforts may sometimes appear to be futile and tragic, they do have the value or worth of expressing independent thinking and action. Even though domination and dependency may appear to be rooted down permanently by the weight of history, these are not absolutes. In this regard, it is theoretically appropriate to think in terms of what Sally Falk Moore (1975) has proposed as a basic postulate and an underlying quality of social life: "theoretically absolute indeterminacy." The value of indeterminacy is that it introduces a negotiable element in many real situations whereby individuals or groups may accommodate a range of strategies that include manipulation, interpretation, and choice, thus leaving the situation open to a multiplicity of alternatives and meanings (Moore 1975).

The Rio Indio, a Section of the Region

In this dissertation, the Indio river is used as a sample or section of a larger geographical area commonly known in Panamá as the Lower Coast and characterized by a series of rivers or drainage systems. Although each river may vary slightly from the others, the settlements of human groups along the Rio Indio reveal general tendencies that have occurred in the human occupation of the Lower Coast in this century. A num-

ber of different variables (including kinship, language, human ecology, ritual, education, economic and political activities) will be analyzed in a systemic approach to show that the regionalism of the Lower Coast is a consequence of interdependent and interconnected social systems but they vary partly as a function of environmental conditions of different zones, partly as a result of historic settlements of different cultural or ethnic groups, and partly in response to external conditions related to international commerce and government policies. Any kind of planning for this area cannot be effective unless it takes into account the variations and the interconnections of these social systems. Otherwise, the human groups in this area will be either "pyramids of sacrifice" for the sake of political economies (Berger 1976), or they may seek alternatives through the elaboration of culture and social organization (Adams 1981) as they have done already in the past and as they are attempting to do in the present. These alternatives are structures and mechanisms of social organization and cultural ideologies that parallel the dominant social structure and ideology of the political economy of a nation. These "secondary co-axes" (Adams 1981) allow human groups to negotiate their own position and retain a certain degree of autonomy without succumbing entirely to the control of the dominant society or culture.

Community Study

A key element in hominid development has been the acquisition of knowledge (learning or information) and identity in a social or community context (Kimball 1980 b). The community systems of the peoples of the Lower Coast of Panamá have been crucial developmental processes for them in responding to internal and external conditions. Moreover, it is the

study of community systems that makes possible the identification of the various and interconnected social systems in the Lower Coast.

Like regional analysis, the community study is a heuristic device used to analyze the nodal units encompassed by a region. By levels of contrast, a regional study would be a macro, all-embracing analysis made possible by the prior identification of micro units through the community study. By levels of inclusion, regional analysis and community study resemble each other in that both refer to systems of spatial and temporal relations between people and natural resources and among groups of people. Both deal with "a master system encompassing social forms and cultural behavior in interdependent subsidiary systems" (Arensberg and Kimball 1972). To better understand this definition, it shall be dissected into its component parts. The two basic factors are social structure as interactional patterns and behavior as culture (Arensberg and Kimball 1972).

Human organization is premised on the law of incest prohibition requiring exogamous groups of persons to interact in predictable manners. This key and primal technique of development of the human species compels organizational structures that transcend the family unit and relate several family units trigenerationally in order to assure the mating of two sexes and the nurturance of children through a prolonged infancy and late maturity (Partridge 1974). The regular and patterned relations--*social organization*--stem from and vary according to the learning experiences of preceding generations. These trans-generational experiences set forth behavioral examples--*culture*--which influence the choices made by individuals in such matters as mate selection, settlement, subsistence, consumption, exchange of goods and services, beliefs, and the like (Partridge 1974). The caveat must be made, nevertheless, that socio-cultural aspects may be

temporary, incomplete, inconsistent, ambiguous, discontinuous, contradictory, paradoxical, and conflicting even though culture and organized or patterned social relations provide a certain degree of determinacy (Moore 1975). This is particularly true where different human groups encounter each other.

Interactions and cultural behavior do not occur in a vacuum. They take place in an environmental context, which is the third component variable in defining community study (Arensberg and Kimball 1972). This environmental context refers to specific conditions of the natural world to which people adaptively respond (Partridge 1974), as well as to the cultural features in the environment resulting from their adaptation (Vayda and Rappaport 1968). These adaptations occur within a spatial and temporal frame, with the temporal axis including historical events.

Event Analysis

Since time and space are socially structured through the relations and activities of people in their events, the analysis of events is an important anthropological tool in a community study. In other words, events are activities and relations of people within a given time and space. These human events can be discerned or analyzed by the order of action in which people structure their habitual relations. In short, event analysis is "the tracing of interconnections of behavior in time and space and in relation to the conditions of the situation" (Arensberg and Kimball 1972: 244; Kimball and Pearsall 1955).

An example of an event may be something as ordinary as women washing clothes in a river. From personal participant observation, it is known that women ordinarily schedule their washing in the river at certain times

in relation to the activities of other members of the household and also in relation to certain other women so that a group of women get together in certain territorially recognized spots in the river that are associated with their particular set or clique and that reflect the status of their households in the community.

A more conspicuous event would be the celebration of a ritual that telescopes in a condensed form the nature of the community. The ritual is thus "structurally redundant" in that it is a restatement, a stylized performance, or a display of the social system as it is constituted (Partridge 1977). On the other hand, the ritual event may be a means of "system transformation" (Partridge 1977). In that case, the ritual is part of a process of transitional change in the lives of individuals like in a rite of passage from childhood into puberty, or in the larger social system as the beginning or the end of a work-ecological cycle.

Sociolinguistics, Ethnohistory, Ritual and Symbolism

Another important tool in community study is sociolinguistics, or how language is used in a society (Bauman and Sherzer 1977; Giglioli 1976; Gumperz and Hymes 1972; Hymes 1974; Trudgill 1979). As indicated by Burns (1980a:307), "the grip that language holds on people is due to the fact that speech connects them." Speech events link people in time and space.

In the spatial dimension, the ethnography of speaking is a valuable tool to understand how people categorize their physical spaces (Spradley 1970), or the roles of members in their social setting (Spradley and Mann 1975). In this dissertation, reference is made to speech categories of the different human groups in describing their settlements and the spaces occupied by other human groups in the region and in the country. Speech

categories are also used to describe and define social roles in the household and the settlement.

On the temporal axis, oral literature and oral history are most valuable tools in understanding the formation of communities through time, as well as the differences and similarities between human groups interacting in a given area. The ethnic identity and the nature of the communities of three human groups are portrayed in this dissertation through the collection and analysis of their oral histories. Wherever possible, the oral historical data have been correlated with documented historical accounts. The main purpose, however, has not been to validate oral history by comparison and contrast with written history. Rather, the concern has been to express the thoughts and experiences of common men and women as narrated and conversed by them. These oral narratives and conversations of common men and women are just as important to an understanding of historical events as are the thoughts and experiences of a few figures in positions of high status within the political economy of any nation.

As demonstrated by Burns (1977), the past continues to live in the present and is recreated anew through speech events. In this dissertation, ethnohistory has also been used as a method to correct what Bell and Newby (1971:137) indicate is a weakness in community studies "which . . . view the countryside as essentially unchanging" in the form of structural-functional analysis à la Merton (1957). Also, as recommended by Cole and Wolf (1974:21), the best way to discover the interplay between the local level and the larger system in the "outside" world is from the historical perspective. The characteristics and capabilities or relative strengths of relations can be better determined from a historical point of view (Cole and Wolf 1974:21). The interplay between "traditionalism" and "modernization," of

how they interpenetrate and determine each other, is best understood through history (Cole and Wolf 1974:21-22). The local communities are as much a product of the economies, politics, and ideologies of the nation and the world, as they are of local level social and ecological influences (Cole and Wolf 1974:21-22).

In this dissertation, ethnohistory has also been inferred from the analysis of the symbolism in dramatical ritual events. These dramatical ritual events are metonyms that condense and emotionally structure the historical narrative so that the participants can personally identify with the events in a metaphoric process. Although referring back to something that occurred in the past, the metonymic process extends into the present and future and becomes a metaphoric process by which one takes the metonym and associates it with something else, most often oneself and one's own condition (Smith, Robert 1975:97-100). In other words, the dramatic ritual events are metonymic in the sense that they are signs that represent part of an overall domain, category, or topic (Leach 1976; Sapir 1977). For example, the rebellion of runaway slaves is an overall historical domain or topic represented in a ritual by dramatical events such as tying and beating a ritual participant at a punishment pole. These dramatical events are metaphoric, that is, symbolic (Leach 1976), in that they can have other meanings outside the overall domain and in relation to another domain. For example, the punishment enacted in a ritual event may be transformed or transferred by the metaphoric process and associated with personal experiences like underpayment and overwork. In the metonymic and metaphoric processes of ritual presented in this dissertation, particular attention has been paid to the role of women as has been recommended by Spring and Hoch-Smith (1978).

Human Ecology

Like the foregoing theoretical approaches, human ecology is also a systemic, heuristic device. It deals with a hierarchy of conditions that shape the adaptations of human groups at one level of the system, but these adaptations in turn are variables in higher, encompassing systems (Collier 1975). At the lower levels the significant units are not the individual human organisms but the populations or groups living within a given area-- a principle similar to the focus on groups of people as required by the exogamous law and as posited by the community-study method. At higher levels, the populations within a given area constitute communities that interact within an ecosystem, that is, a system of relations of the human populations among themselves, with their non-living environment, and with other living species (Vayda and Rappaport 1968).

Although the ultimate goal of human ecology is to understand the all-encompassing ecosystem (Vayda and Rappaport 1968), the methodology that is usually followed in ecological studies places immediate emphasis on those "variables that have direct impact on the survival of the organism" (Collier 1975). For Julian Steward (1955), the techno-economic adaptations of human groups, specifically those related to nutrition, have the most direct impact on their survival. In the contemporary international economic society, of which the north-central Caribbean coast of Panamá is a part, techno-economic adaptations include such things as wage-paying jobs and cash-raising activities that are "structured to a large degree around inputs which are increasingly socio-cultural in nature and are of regional, national, and international origin" (Cook 1973).³

Development

Socio-cultural conditions of regional, national, and international origin lead to the concept of development. In the contemporary international economic system of which Third World countries like Panamá are a vital part, development is usually defined by economists and development planners as "increases in production and consumption" (Pitt 1976a:1, 8). In order to realize such increases, it is often considered necessary to provide a minimal social infrastructure that includes goods and services affecting health, education, housing, and transportation. But those who are the targets of such development may have different ideas, in different times, spaces, and contexts about how these types of infrastructures can be linked with their own goals in life involving status, power, and identity. These goals of local level "developers from below" are synonymous with socio-economic mobility and with indigenous systems of development through the elaboration of culture and social organization as community systems. This perspective does not imply that community development is based primarily on community action or village culture, but it also takes into account external conditions and superordinate groups in terms of linkages between the community and the larger systems (Schwartz 1978). In terms of socio-economic mobility, the goals of local level "developers from below" include the extent to which individual members of the community as well as the community as a whole attain socio-economic mobility.

With regard to the role of the anthropologist in development, the major guiding principles are those of interpretation and mediation between those planning and programming "development from above" and those whose beliefs, values, attitudes, and accomplishments represent efforts of "develop-

ment from below." The need for interpretation and mediation arises because the developmental sequences are quite opposite if they come from "above" or from "below." As has been indicated by Sally Falk Moore (1975: 214), the social planner and ideologue is a conscious organizer who plans organization according to an ideology, a model, a plan, or a purpose that comes first, and the actual organization or structure is assembled afterwards. For those undertaking "development from below," the "on the ground" organization is first based on their "rule of residence," which undergoes modifications and changes through decision-making processes in making choices among the alternatives present in the local and national situations.

The role of the anthropologist is to find if there are points where the ideologies and organizational structures of the two groups can be linked to establish a negotiable interaction. In the negotiation process, the role of the anthropologist is to advocate for those intended to be the beneficiaries of planned projects (Cardenas and Miller 1981:14). In other words, the anthropologist must be clear and honest in interpreting the culture and social structure of the beneficiaries, their attitudes and perceptions, and translating them into creative and practical suggestions for improvements in the program effectiveness and costs savings (Cardenas and Miller 1981:14). In terms of costs savings, not only should these include monetary savings, but also the unquantifiable costs of degrading human dignity and degrading ecological conditions. Within the social structure, special attention must be paid to the role of women and children in food production, as they are often overlooked in rural development planning (Food and Agriculture Organization 1979; United Nations Decade for Women 1980).

Likewise, the anthropologist must be clear and honest in interpreting the culture and social structures of the planning agency, its personnel, objectives, and ideologies, and translating these into practical terms for the "beneficiaries" or "targets" so that they have access to information upon which, as independent decision-makers, they can choose among the alternatives available to them. These alternatives must include "the potentialities for change, and what harm may come from change" (Cochrane 1974:21), as well as the benefits. This does not mean that the role of the anthropologist as mediator in community development is an "either/or" situation as has been posed by Schwartz (1978:255), who cautiously fears that anthropologists may find themselves without sponsors or hosts if they operate at the level of national and supranational policy-making as well as at the grassroots level in mobilizing political action groups. Admittedly, to "walk the tight rope" and to be "betwixt and between" is a difficult role but a necessary one in the application of anthropology.

The Methodology

The preceding theoretical approaches are based upon the scientific method of induction. The analyses here presented have proceeded from the particular to the general. Individual persons, households, and events were observed through the key anthropological tool of participant observation. These observations were made first during a preliminary field reconnaissance of the Rio Indio in June and July 1977. An account of this preliminary survey is given in Appendix I. This was followed by 19 months of field research from August 3, 1978, to March 3, 1980. During this ex-

tended period, eight months were spent residing with each of the two major groups, respectively; that is, eight months with the *Playeros* and eight months with the upriver, inland *Naturales*. Throughout this period, the migrant *Interioranos* were observed in their interactions with the two major groups. The remaining three months were spent collecting data in urban centers, lecturing, and working with the staff of the Museum of the Panamanian Man in setting up a travelling exhibit of photos and artifacts depicting aspects of life in the Lower Coast (July 1979 b). The exhibit and its booklet served as feedback mechanisms to let the peoples of the Lower Coast see by themselves why and what it was that a *vidajena* (busybody) was doing among them. Proof that they understood better the role of the anthropologist is that after the exhibit they graduated her with the title of *profesora* (professor) and began using the word *antropóloga* (anthropologist) as a term of reference. This made it difficult to continue relations, especially with children, in an informal basis, but it also triggered more intimate dialogues about *luchas* (struggles) in life with adults.

Participant observations were complemented with the use of other research tools. A Guttman scale (Pelto and Pelto 1978:298-303) of areas of social differentiation (Young and Fujimoto 1965) was made to establish easily recognized differences and similarities between the coastal and inland settlements. Results of this analysis were presented at the Second National Congress of Anthropology, Archaeology, and Ethnohistory of Panamá in December 1978 (July 1978). An oral history of the cash booms in Rio Indio was compiled from an informal questionnaire on the economic history of the households in the *Playero* settlement of Boca de Rio Indio and the upriver, inland settlement of the *Naturales* at Boca de Uracillo. This questionnaire was administered at the same time that census data and gene-

alogies were gathered in the households. The history of the cash booms was presented in English at the Inter-American Foundation Fellowship Conference in Quito, Ecuador, in May 1979. A Spanish version was filed in the archives of the Museum of the Panamanian Man, for publication pending in the Journal of Historical Patrimony of the National Institute of Culture (July 1979 a).

Quantitative measures were made at such events as fishing, harvesting, and marketing. Copies were made of the records of organizations that had record-keeping practices such as the cooperative of coffee growers, the planned agricultural settlements of the Ministry of Agricultural Development, and the agro-industrial cooperative that owns and manages a palm oil plantation. Interviews with certain individuals as well as speech events at meetings, festivals, and wakes were recorded in cassettes. Photos were taken of events, and a system of reciprocity was established using photos as a medium of exchange for information and participation in events.

Sociolinguistics was a pervasive methodology that ran as a thread throughout the research, in a continuous dialogue with the people not as informants or subjects of study but as teachers who were teaching the anthropologist about their own lives and about her own role as a professional anthropologist. As part of the sociolinguistic methodology, attention was also paid to the ethnography of writing as recommended by Basso (1977) and Howe (1979).

The process of analysis of the data was accomplished partially in the field, and more extensively upon return to the University of Florida. Both in Panamá and in the United States, detachment from the immediate field situation provided greater analytic perspectives. In Panamá, the

monthly trip to the urban center to collect mail, funds, and supplies provided some of this detachment. Ordering of the files in a storage room generously provided by friends in Colón was an analytic process that made it possible on a monthly basis to know how much and what had been accomplished. The collection of mail also made it possible to maintain some sort of remote interaction with professors of the doctoral committee who made relevant suggestions and comments in their notes and letters. This interaction with the professors was intensified with personal dialogues upon return to the university and their comments on the writing of the preliminary draft. This dialogue between student and professors is a critical element in the analytic process as has been aptly documented in *The Craft of Community Study: Fieldwork Dialogues* by Kimball and Partridge (1979). Professional colleagues in the social sciences in Panamá were also part of this dialogue, as well as members of the Screening Committee and fellows of the Inter-American Foundation during the mid-year fellowship conferences held in Quito, Ecuador, in 1979, and in New Orleans, U.S.A., in 1980.

Finally, the process of analysis included a series of lectures, the reading of papers at professional meetings, and the submission of papers for review and publication. This meant that the data had to be used in certain ways to address certain problems for specific audiences that ranged from professional anthropologists to high school students in social studies, university students in social sciences, biologists at a research institute, botanists and ecologists at a professional meeting, business executives at a Rotary Club meeting, the general public attending the museum exhibit, and fellow students and professors at Florida. The paper read at the 79th annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in December 1980 in Washington, D.C., is a simplified version of the chapter in this dis-

sertation that describes and analyzes the system of *principales* of the *Naturales* (July 1980). The paper that was awarded the first prize in the 1981 Student Paper Competition of the Southern Anthropological Society (July 1981 a) and the paper read at the 16th annual meeting of this society (July 1981 b) dealt with sociolinguistic, political, and historical implications of a ritual event celebrated annually by the *Playeros*.

Not all the field data, however, have been analyzed in this dissertation. It is hoped that the unused data will serve for future lectures, publications, and application as an advisory consultant and an activist advocate. The process of analysis, therefore, will continue as is the case in the life of any scientific researcher.

Notes

1 The Panamanian slogan for the "Conquest of the Atlantic" is similar to the Nicaraguan slogan for the "Awakening of the Atlantic" as follows:

For the revolutionary government, the Atlantic region is an important one, as a billboard in Managua advertised: *La Costa Atlántica: Un gigante que despierta*, "The Atlantic Coast: A giant that awakes." The promise is of new land for Nicaragua *campesinos* and new areas of production to increase the level of yield of the nation as a whole. The perspective is a bit reminiscent of the Australian colonist view of an "empty continent"--ignoring that it was filled with aboriginal people. In a similar vein, one might observe that the Atlantic Coast has not been asleep, but expanding somewhat uneasily (Adams 1981:16-17).

2 In this survey, Richard Adams (1976:113) was the first to report that the "predominantly negroid" people of Palmas Bellas in the Lower Coast referred to "backland people of an Indian background" as *Naturales*, and that some of these negroid people had "a strong Indian component."

3 Although in certain academic circles in anthropology in the United States it is considered that placing emphasis on the techno-economic base of society is a Marxist theoretical approach, the writer does not profess herself to be a Marxist scholar but is essentially an eclectic who mixes theoretical approaches in a toss salad of various colors and textures, as only then can the variety and complexity of human phenomena be properly accounted for. Although Marxist theories in the United States are commonly associated with the political economy of the Soviet Union, the emphasis on the techno-economic base of society as expounded by Marxist anthropologists in the United States can also be associated with the capitalism of the United States. Historically and in the contemporary political climate of the United States, it is believed that the more capital there is from technology and economy, the better, stronger, and more powerful the United States will become. In fact, in the personal lives of some U. S. anthropologists who consider themselves Marxist in orientation, their personal material wealth signifies that they really practice their theoretical beliefs that the bottom layer of the cake of society is the techno-economic base upon which rest all the other layers of society.

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPALES OF THE NATURALES

This chapter will present the first of the three major human groups in the Lower Coast, the *Naturales*, and their system of socio-economic development, the *principales* (principals). In this presentation, references will be made to the contrasting systems of development of the other two major groups in this region, the Afro-Hispanic *Playeros* and the migrant *Interioranos*. Their respective systems of development will be described in subsequent chapters.

The *Naturales* number about 25,000 people. They live in the mountainous zone of the Continental Divide and extend down the Atlantic slope to about 10 km from the Caribbean shoreline, residing along the banks of the major rivers. They are of Indian ancestry, but have undergone Spanish acculturation and limited miscegenation with Europeans and Afro-Americans. *Naturales* is a reference term of respect for these people as used by the *Playeros* at the mouths of the rivers by the seashore. It contrasts with the disrespectful term of reference *Cholos* (straight-haired indigenes or acculturated Indians) as used by the *Playeros* and the *Interioranos*.

The ethnic origin and identity of the *Naturales* will be discussed first in terms of written and oral history as well as by their participation in ritual events of nativistic movements. The structure and dynamics of their system of *principales* will then be analyzed in terms of ethnosemantic classification and through the event analysis of activities that

they perform. Key variables of the system of *principales* will be identified and integrated into a model. The limitations of the system of *principales* and its implications for development agencies and for the future of the *Naturales* will be discussed last. A case history of the *principales* of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio will be given in the following chapter to exemplify the model covered in this chapter.

Ethnic Origin and Identity

The *Naturales* of the Lower Coast could be descendants of the Indians encountered by Christopher Columbus during his fourth and last voyage, when he founded the first continental Spanish settlement in 1503 at the mouth of the Belén river in this section of the Isthmian Caribbean coast (Colón 1947:293-309). Their ancestors could also be those buried in the funerary urns that were excavated near the present chapel at Boca de Uracillo (Sterling 1953). They could also descend from the people whose ceramic sherds, surface-collected on the banks of the Teriá and Indio rivers, indicate a continuity of the same ceramic traditions of the Indian chiefdoms on the Isthmian central Pacific plain (Cooke 1976 and personal communication).

Rather than speculate about the ethnic origin of the *Naturales* of the Lower Coast, their identity will be defined by their participation in the events of a civil war and two nativistic movements in this century. As proposed by Kimball (1980a:28), "identity is a function of participation in a variety of events external to the individual." The events that confer identity to the *Naturales* are associated with their residence within a "region of refuge" as defined by Aguirre Beltrán (1967/1979). This region

is the northern mountains of Coclé or Penonomé. By their residence in this area, the *Naturales* are the people who have been historically referred to as the "*Cholos* of the mountains of Coclé" (Carles 1977) or "*Cholos* of Penonomé" (Conte Guardia 1964). Moreover, the *Naturales* themselves trace their ancestry to those whom they say are the "people of Penonomé."

Penonomé, a Center for Indians

The thesis of Conte Guardia (1964), examining the acculturation of the *Cholos penonomeños*, revealed similar processes to those found in the oral history and cultural traditions of the *Naturales* of the Lower Coast. These acculturation processes began with the rise of Penonomé as a religious, political, and economic center for the Indians in the northern mountains during Spanish colonialism. Up until the 1950s, Penonomé continued to be a religious center for the people in the Lower Coast. Many *Naturales* and some *Playeros* in the Lower Coast made annual pilgrimages across the Continental Divide to Penonomé to attend traditional religious festivals such as Holy Week and Saint Rose of Lima on September 30. At such religious events, economic exchanges would also occur such as the bulk sale of rubber from the Atlantic and the bulk purchase of salt from the Pacific to be retailed on the Atlantic side.

Penonomé, the present capital of the province of Coclé, was founded on the Pacific plains by the Spaniards in 1573 as a *pueblo de indios* (Indian town), to control the Indians in the mountains north of this site (Castillero Calvo 1967, 1971). Since that time and until the present, the political jurisdiction over these northern mountains of Coclé or Penonomé has extended into the Atlantic slope. Under the Colombian administration of the Isthmus in the 1800s, the Department of Coclé extended all the way

to the Caribbean shores, including the district of Donoso. In 1880, Donoso was separated from Coclé and was appended to the new Department of Colón that was created after the construction of the transisthmian railroad (Jaén Arosemena 1956:12). Part of Coclé, nevertheless, continued to extend half-way down the Atlantic slope as it still does nowadays (See Map 1.1). The *Naturales* refer to this Atlantic section as the "inside," while lands south of the Continental Divide on the Pacific slope are referred to as the "outside."

The One Thousand Day War

Under the Colombian Law 89 of 1890, the "*Cholos* of the mountains of Coclé" could hold elections among themselves to select one of their own for the position of "Governor of the Indians," who "served as a liaison between the regular authorities and the Indian conglomerate" (Carles 1977: 208, translation mine). In 1899, however, the *Cholos'* right to hold elections for this position was cancelled. The second Governor that they had elected, by the surname of Agrajé, encouraged them not to pay the ecclesiastical tithe and the butchering tax for pigs and cattle. In 1899, the visiting Bishop listened to the complaints in this regard made by the ecclesiastical and civilian authorities of Coclé. The Bishop then authorized the Prefect of Coclé to select someone himself for this position without an election by the Indians. The Indian leader, Victoriano Lorenzo, wrote an appeal signed by several hundred Indians to the authorities in Bogotá. The Prefect of Coclé, however, informed the Governor of Panamá that the position of Governor of the Indians was an obstacle to the administration of the region, and the position was abolished. This incident and others led to the rebellion of the Indians headed by Victoriano Lorenzo

during the One Thousand Day War that raged across the Isthmus from 1900 to 1903 (Carles 1966, 1977). During the war, the Atlantic slope served as a source of food for the fighting *Cholos* and a hideout zone. Many old men and women in the Lower Coast nowadays like to relate stories about the civil war that they witnessed in their childhood or heard their parents talk about. As has been indicated by Ervin-Tripp (1972), the selection of a topic by individuals in a conversation reveals their socialization and identity.

The Coclé Reservation

Written documents kept by some *Naturales* in the Lower Coast indicate that they claim to live within the boundaries of what is commonly known as the Coclé Reservation. Legally this is not defined as an Indian reservation but as an "inadjudicative tract of land" set aside by Presidential Decree No. 44 of 27 June 1914, which sanctioned Law No. 20 of 1913.¹ This law and decree were issued by President Belisario Porras at the request of Candelario Ovalle, a *Cholo* who served as secretary for Victoriano Lorenzo during the civil war. Ovalle sought to protect his fellow indigenous countryfolk who had no cattle against landed cattle owners of the Pacific plains. These cattle owners used certain river valleys on the Atlantic slope during the dry season in a transhumance practice to feed their animals when the savanna on the Pacific plains was desiccated by the dry season trade winds. The boundaries of the "inadjudicative tract of land" coincide with the boundaries of the present northern extension of the province of Coclé into the Atlantic slope (Compare Map 1.1 with Map 2.1).

Ovalle's request was part of the Silent War of the countryfolk, whereby they struggled to hold onto their usufruct rights to the land against the expansion of extensive cattle herding and export-crop plantations (Heckadon Moreno 1977a). This problem arose during Spanish colonialism with the demand for food in the urban transisthmian center. It became more acute, however, with the construction of the canal which increased the population in the urban transisthmian center (Heckadon Moreno 1977 a, b).

When Panamá adopted the policy of Agrarian Reform after the Conference of Punta del Este in Uruguay in 1962, the abolition of the Coclé Reservation was contemplated as part of the reform. Over 6000 people within the Indian zone of Coclé signed a petition to the National Assembly requesting retention of their tract of inadjudicative land.² The abolition occurred, nevertheless, with the Constitution of 1972 under the revolutionary government that had taken over in 1968.³ Some *Naturales* in the Lower Coast, nevertheless, are still demanding recognition of the Coclé Reservation. Those in favor of this are members of *FENAC*, *Federación Nacional Campesina* (National Federation of Countryfolk), which is affiliated to the *Central Istmeña de Trabajadores* (The Isthmian Central of Laborers), the national organization affiliated to the *Organización Internacional de Trabajadores* (International Organization of Laborers).

The Nativistic Movements

It is important to mention that more or less contemporaneously with the creation of the Coclé Reservation and with the Agrarian Reform plans to

abolish it, there arose among the *Naturales* in the Lower Coast two nativistic movements within the boundaries of the reservation. These nativistic movements reveal another aspect of the identity of the *Naturales* in times of stress. Both nativistic movements in the Lower Coast coincided with threats from outside political and economic forces impinging upon the region of refuge of the *Naturales*.⁴ The nativism headed by *Segundo Dios* (Second God) at the site of "U" occurred in the interim between the death of the civil war leader Victoriano Lorenzo and the request for the inadjudicative tract of land by his secretary Candelario Ovalle. The nativism led by *La Padra* (The Priestess) coincided with the rumors that the Agrarian Reform would abolish the inadjudicative status of the heartland.

The *Naturales* do not associate the nativistic movements with political and economic forces threatening their territory. These correlations are here made on the basis of the anthropological theories postulated by Wallace (1956) and Aberle (1962) on coping with stress and deprivation.

Wallace (1956) postulated that the various kinds of revitalization movements arise during times of stress. He defined stress as a "condition in which some part, or the whole, of the social organism is threatened with more or less serious damage" (Wallace 1956:265). This condition may arise over a number of years during which a social group experiences increasingly severe stress as a result of interferences with the efficiency of their socio-cultural system. These interferences may be climatic, floral and faunal changes, military defeat, political subordination, extreme pressure toward acculturation resulting in internal cultural conflict, economic distress, epidemics, and so on (Wallace 1956:269). Revitalization refers to the effort to bring the system into congruence and order so as to reduce the stress, and the collaboration of a number of persons in such

an effort makes it a revitalization movement (Wallace 1956:267]. Revitalization movements display various themes that are not mutually exclusive. These themes may be *nativistic* when they emphasize the elimination of alien persons, customs, values, and/or material; *revivalistic* when customs, values, and aspects of nature of previous generations are reinstituted; *cargo cults* that import alien values, customs, and materials that will arrive in a ship or airplane; *messianic* when a divine savior in human flesh will effect the transformation; and *millenarian* when the supernatural engineers an apocalyptic world transformation (Wallace 1956:267).

Aberle (1962) attributes the rise of millenarian and other cult movements to relative deprivation theory. He defines relative deprivation "as a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectation and actuality" (Aberle 1962:209). Discrepancies between legitimate expectation and actuality may arise from change, either by worsening the conditions of a group, or by exposing a group to new standards (Aberle 1962:210). Millenarian and other cult movements are efforts at remedial action to overcome the discrepancy between actuality and legitimate aspiration (Aberle 1962:211). These efforts may take various forms that may include movements which seek supernatural help or supernatural intervention in the affairs of humans (Aberle 1962:212). The movement often justifies removal of the participants from the ordinary spheres of life, not only socially but also spatially (Aberle 1962:214). This withdrawal is functionally significant as a mechanism to compensate for the deprivation (Aberle 1962:214).

The Nativism of Second God

During the first quarter of this century there arose among the *Naturales* the nativistic movement headed by a man named Segundo Sánchez, but

popularly known as *Segundo Dios* (Second God). At the site of "U" by the river "U," Second God founded a settlement enclosed by a fence of crosses and known as the "ark." Those who went to live there would be saved from an impending destruction. Stories and songs still related and sung nowadays by old folks describe life within this settlement, and the rise and fall of Second God. His wife, María del Rosario (Mary of the Rosary), would be dressed in a white tunic as a "blessed virgin" and carried around on a palanquin in a religious procession. Second God would climb on an elevated platform to talk with God. After some years of residing there, people began to abandon the settlement disillusioned with Second God's behavior. He consumed all their resources and is said to have abused sexually all the women in the settlement. He was found mangled and dead in a stream outside the enclosed settlement. Supposedly, he was attacked by the *Malo* (Evil or Devil). Nowadays, people still point to the location where the settlement was located. Many people say that they could see the fence of crosses standing until the late 1940s, even though the place had long before been abandoned.

The Nativism of The Priestess

In the early 1960s, there arose in Teriá another nativistic movement headed by a woman popularly known as *La Padra* (The Priestess). She also would be dressed in a white tunic and carried around on a palanquin in a procession as a "blessed virgin." Although she was known to be illiterate in ordinary life, when in a trance she could speak and read in many tongues unintelligible to the people. She herself would later translate the message of an impending doom. She also forbade the people to wear the *sombrero pintado* (painted hat) worn on feast days or when visiting urban cen-

ters. The black designs on this straw hat were interpreted by The Priestess as evil symbols. She advised people to wear only the *sombrero de junco*, the plain straw hat worn for work because it does not get moldy with the rains as the festive one does.⁵ The removal of the "festive" and "urban" hat and the emphasis on the "work" hat may be interpreted as a rejection of those activities and sites that connote the evil of an "outside" world that detracts value from the work of primary subsistence food production.

In the days of The Priestess, people say that there were stormy rains and winds. Many believed that these forces of nature were foretelling an ominous event. Many went in group pilgrimages to see her at Teriá on the dates that she assigned for special events. Donations were collected from the pilgrims, who were fed and cared for at these sessions. When nothing happened on the day that she had predicted as doomsday, people stopped attending her sessions.

Spring and Hoch-Smith (1978) have called attention to the role of women in ritual and symbolic roles. In this case of nativism, it is particularly significant that a woman assumed a symbolic role as a priestess, which is a male role in the Catholic Church. Moreover, the *Naturales* in their speech inflected the feminine gender for the reference term for the priest in the Catholic Church--*el padre* (the priest). The significance of this reversal may be correlated with the fact that among the *Naturales* women participate in the family decision-making processes with regard to production and marketing, even though they do not do the marketing in urban centers.

Restoration to Regular Living

After the foreboding predictions did not materialize, the *Naturales* called Catholic priests to bless the sites where these two nativistic events

had occurred. At both sites it is said that evil signs appeared prior to or during the priest's visits, and disappeared after their blessings. In these two cases of nativism, the people later associated the leaders and/or members of their families with evil. This rationalization absolves all others who participated in the events from any personal association with evil and future danger.

These nativistic movements can also be interpreted as attempts for independent thinking, action, and identity. After the movements failed, more universalistic (or at least nationally approved) religious institutions were brought back in to symbolize the return to national thought and socio-cultural structure.

The System of Principales

A further aspect of the identity of the *Naturales* as *Cholos coclesanos* is based upon their system of *principales*. Under this process of socio-economic and physical mobility, the *Naturales* have extended from their heartland, or region of refuge, down the rivers of the Atlantic slope. They have thus, in effect, extended the boundaries originally provided for them by the Coclé Reservation.

The system of *principales* is one in which population is distributed throughout a territory of use including a nucleus of a primary kin unit that is affiliated with communal facilities and other clusterings of households scattered throughout the territory. The *principales* is here defined as a community system because it is a process of social relations that occurs through time and space. The spatial arrangement or design, of course, reveals a pattern of settlement. It must be clarified, however, that it is

the nature of systemic analysis as a process and not the morphology of pattern that is here presented. An operational model will first be described in this chapter. This model will then be illustrated with a case history in the following chapter.

The Model

The Extended Family Unit

To understand the system of *principales*, one must first understand the structure and function of the extended family as a domestic unit of production in relation to the land use pattern. This extended family unit is a cluster of related households that functions as a cooperative social group for subsistence and market exchange. The unit is connected with the outside through members who participate in economic, political, and educational activities.

The *Naturales* live in extended family units. Married children live in separate houses but in close proximity to the parents of either the husband or the wife. There is the tendency to reside near to the parents who have the greatest amount of economic resources. In other words, post-marital residence can be either uxorilocal or virilocal depending on the economic status of the marriage partner. In a few cases, post-marital residence is with the parents who need the most assistance, regardless of economic status, as in the case of sick or widowed parents. And there are also cases of alternating post-marital residence with both sets of parents, particularly during the initial years of marriage, or seasonally according to the work and school cycles. At any rate, there is regional and territorial endogamy so that new couples are relatively close to either parents

regardless of where they decide to live. Finally, there are a few cases of polygyny, of men with two wives within the same house; or in separate houses within the same extended family home site; or with one wife residing at her parents' home site and the other at the husband's parents' home site, although both reside within the same settlement.

Unmarried children of marriageable age often build separate houses for themselves near to their parents' house. They sleep here with an unmarried sibling or cousin of the same sex, but eat at their parents' house. That will become their post-marital residence once they pair with a marriage partner.

In addition to these houses at the main home site, there are two other sets of houses that are used by the extended family unit. One is a temporary shelter and storage house built near to the swidden plot. Sexual relations are most often held at the field house and not at the main house. Another house, either temporary or permanent in structure, is built close to the nucleus of community symbols; that is, the school, chapel, and store. School children use this house during the school year, either as a resting and eating place during the day, or as a sleeping place during the week if accompanied by an adult relative, usually a grandmother. They return to their permanent home site daily, or on weekends, and on holidays. This house is also used on Sundays when attending church, and on feast days.

The parents and older siblings are regarded as *principales* by the youngest siblings of the extended family unit. The *principales* are credited with the *mejoras* (improvements) at the *puesto* (living and agricultural site). In other words, parents and older siblings are a core of elders who are given credit for originating or initiating improvements and practices. These include such things as the houses, cash crops, cattle pas-

tures, extension of land worked by swidden agriculture, fruit groves, and boats. Most societies recognize elders within the family, but the significance of this case is that there is a specific term *principales* in addition to the regular kinship terms of reference for the older generation.

The decision-making process is one in which all family members, regardless of age or sex, participate in the evening and early-morning group decision-making sessions. Everyone expresses her/his opinion and suggests alternative actions. The ultimate decision is one which is sanctioned by the *principales*. Everyone acts according to situational circumstances, however, even if the action overrides the preliminary decisions.

Middle children are usually treated differently from the older and younger children. Middle children are usually the ones who are *echados afuera* (thrown outside) to a formal high school; to seek temporary cash employment; to become politicians or government employees like school teachers, police officers, medical assistants; or become motorboat operators. In other words, middle children are usually intermediaries with the outside world. Attention is paid, however, to capabilities demonstrated by all the children and which of them might better fulfill this role. The significance of this case in the treatment of middle children, both males and females, to become intermediaries with the outside world is that it is a conscious and planned household strategy that involves a family decision-making process. It is not what Wolf (1956) described as the behavior pattern of a single individual who seeks to become an economic and political "broker" of nation-community relations and, therefore, shapes personal behavior to fit these expectations.

The youngest siblings remain close to the parents to work in the family rural economy. They are the *bordones* (staves) for aged parents.

They are usually named after the parents: particularly the last male child is named after the father. The significance of this is that food production is assured by involving the oldest and youngest children in the rural family economy, and only removing middle children from primary food production. Wage labor of middle children also assures a cash income other than that from the sale of agricultural cash products.

In general, all children refer to themselves as *respaldantes* (supporters) of their parents when they live and work in an extended family unit.

The extended family works as a unit a parcel of land. In addition, parents may give married children a parcel of land and some animals if the marriage proves stable after the initial years, fruitful in children, and the marriage partner faithful and hardworking. Parents will be on the lookout to purchase usufruct rights of parcels of land that can be held in reserve for their children when they marry, without having to subdivide the global land. In addition, married children buy and work plots of their own. Children often delay marriage so as to continue working in the family unit without the responsibility of caring for additional people.

Upon death of the father, the parcel of land is retained as a unit by the mother and unmarried children. If the youngest siblings are married, there may be a subdivision among all siblings, or the youngest siblings may hold to the global unit excluding the older siblings. Older siblings, then, have whatever they received or bought after marriage. The younger siblings, therefore, represent a threat to the older siblings and a threat to the continuity of the extended family as a working unit. If the split occurs, the parents' siblings will support their younger nieces and nephew against the older ones. When the older children were young,

the parents enlisted the support of their own siblings. As the children grew older, they displaced their uncles and aunts.

To recapitulate, the key variables in the structure and function of an extended family unit are:

1. A core of elders known as the *principales*, that includes the parents and older children, who initiate improvements and sanction the decision-making processes of the family.
2. A group of supporters that includes the younger children who back the older *principales*.
3. Different occupational roles among the siblings, whereby middle siblings serve as intermediaries with the outside world while the oldest and the youngest support the parents at different stages in the life cycle of the parents. Involving the oldest and youngest children in the rural agricultural economy assures the primary production of food. Removing middle children from primary food production assures a cash income other than that from the sale of agricultural cash products.
4. Retention of a parcel of land that is worked by the extended family as a unit.
5. Additional plots of land worked individually by married children.
6. Cleavage lines between older and younger siblings that present a potential threat to the continuity of the extended family unit.

The Settlement

A settlement of *Naturales* replicates the structure and function of an extended family unit upon which it is based. The extended family that initiates improvements in a settlement is known as the *principales* of the settlement. These improvements include such things as a retail store, a

chapel, a primary school, a dance hall, a softball field. Other families who help to build these physical meeting places and participate in the activities held in them are the supporters of the *principales*. Usually the supporting families are united to the *principales* by consanguinity, affinity, and ritual *compadrazgo*. As a consequence, one often hears the statement that settlement A "belongs" to family A, settlement B to family B, and C hived off from A and D from B.

In other words, a settlement may be distinguished from a primary kin clustering by the addition of affiliated families into a corporate unit whose division of labor has as a consequence the establishment of facilities and activities that are beneficial to the group as a whole. The fact that there are kin connections may cement or enhance the cohesion, or cause potential factionalism and fissioning in the same way that there are potential lines of cleavage in the extended family unit.

The dynamics of socio-economic mobility of the *principales* of a settlement reveals the following sequence of events that occur over an average period of three decades. The process is inferred from data on settlements along the Rio Indio.

An extended family moves from a "parent" upriver settlement and localizes at a new site further downriver on the banks of a major river. Usufruct rights at the new site are bought from a resident there, who moves away from the vicinity. Money to buy the usufruct rights at the new site originates from savings of the sale of cash products and/or from wages. A married middle sibling is left behind at the old site to hold onto the usufruct rights there in case that they do not fare well at the new site and have to return. Once economic endeavors at the new site prove successful, those left behind sell the old usufruct property and reunite with the

extended family at the new site. An alternative first step is the fissioning off of married middle children who occupy a neighboring territory where they or the parents bought usufruct rights. Although the parents and older siblings will remain at the base or home territory, they will assist the middle children in working at the new site.

At the new site, the extended family produces subsistence and cash products. They also become intermediaries in marketing products from households in the surrounding area. This marketing generates enough capital to set up a store on the "outside" of a site, that is, by the river bank, and visible to passersby along a primary river that is a travel artery.

The store serves as a collection center for cash products, a distribution center for manufactured goods from the urban world, and a meeting place for neighboring residents who there exchange news and information. The storekeeper usually knows how to administer traditional and contemporary medicines. In marketing the cash products and in setting up the store, the *Naturales* may go into a partnership with a *Playero* entrepreneur, or may enlist the support of a *Playero* politician to obtain the legal permit for the store.⁶ At this stage, establishing a store only qualifies the originators as *negociantes* (business entrepreneurs) and not yet as *principales* vis-à-vis neighboring extended families and settlements.

The extended family expands "inside," that is, away from the river bank which is considered the "outside." They expand by working subsistence plots "inside" in the hinterland. Neighbors assist in this task by being invited to *untas* or *juntas* (festive work parties), by reciprocal labor arrangements, or by hired cash labor. The establishment of the inland subsistence plots validates the usufruct rights to an extensive ter-

ritory. Later on, in about 20 years, plots are allowed to revert to secondary growth. The perimeter of the claimed tract of land is marked by active or abandoned plots.

As the extended family grows in numbers, and members of the third generation marry, the new households occupy strategic sites within the territory. Many of the new marital relations are alliances with neighboring residents who are thus linked with the *principales* to form a corporate system. Their incorporation also expands the territory. In the 1970s, a territory under the control of *principales* varied between 20 and 30 km², for a population of 175 to 300 persons, including 30+ to 60+ households. Half of the population is under age fifteen.

A decisive step in becoming *principales* of a settlement is to have a member of the extended family become an official in the political government bureaucracy. This is often secured through political relations with the Afro-Hispanic *Playeros*. Participation in political institutions is used first to make a petition to the Ministry of Education for the appointment of a primary school teacher. This subsequently incurs the construction of a school building. Institutionalized formal primary education is perceived as a social improvement that benefits all the households in the vicinity. By signing the petition for a teacher and assisting in building the school, neighboring households thus support the originators and confirm upon them the status of *principales*. This status, however, must be continuously validated by initiating further improvements. If this is neglected, another extended family may assume the status by becoming initiators of other facilities and, in so doing, may set in motion either fissioning or factionalism. The latter occurs when the former status holders retain control of the facilities that they initiated, while the new status

contenders direct activities at the facilities that they introduced.

Further proof of status is established if the *principales* introduce concurrently with the school a Catholic chapel. Catholic missionary priests are invited to the settlement. The missionaries will stipulate certain conditions, such as training lay people to serve as catechists and representatives of the church. These roles as lay ecclesiastical workers are usually filled by members of the extended family of *principales*. A patron saint is selected for the settlement. The patronal festival may not necessarily honor the saint, but rather the chief *principal* or founder of the settlement. He or she may bear the saint's name by having been born on that saint's day.

In celebrating the patronal festival, the sale of alcoholic beverages, food, and tickets for dancing becomes the principal means of capital formation for a community fund. This fund finances not only the expenses of the patronal festival, but also contributes towards community development projects sponsored by national and international donors that require the participation of the recipients with materials, labor, or cash. After experience is acquired in organizing patronal festivals, other feasts are organized to celebrate national holidays or to generate capital to cancel long-term loans. These feasts also offer the opportunity for residents of different settlements to visit and cooperate with each other.

The support of missionaries is also enlisted to appeal to the "Christian," that is, humanitarian sentiments of urbanites, who can donate such things as health care, medicines, clothing, toys. In the 1970s, the Claretian missionaries working in the Lower Coast introduced a cooperative among coffee growers and a development program for women. These programs are "development from above" depending on international funding. For their

implementation, however, the missionaries have used the system of *principales* unwittingly. Members of the *principales* act as coordinators and promoters of these programs.

Government agencies have also unwittingly used the system of *principales* to extend such services as health programs and credit for agricultural production. This has been done through those *principales* who have sought out these services. Reasons for participating in government programs, however, are not necessarily those intended by the government agency. For example, a settlement on the east bank of the Rio Indio agreed to become an *asentamiento campesino*, a planned agricultural program of the Ministry of Agricultural Development, in order to obtain legal protection for their territory from the encroaching advancement of migrant *Interioranos*. Since the Ministry of Agricultural Development also extends credit to the migrants, the *Naturales* perceive some of the government services as contradictory and against their interests, especially when they are told that all land belongs ultimately to the government. The *principales*, nevertheless, try to negotiate their dealings with these agencies to get whatever they really want from the agencies without succumbing to their control.

As the *principales* of different settlements vie with each other in seeking what may be perceived as benefits from these programs, the competition serves to extend the programs across the region. Pressures will be exerted by the *principales* upon the government and missionaries to rotate key positions in the projects among the *principales* of the different settlements. Such positions as supervisors and accountants for the projects and capital installations are salaried employments. Since the donors do not reside in the region, they depend on such salaried employment of *prin-*

cipales for coordinators, supervisors, and accountants.

Competition within the same settlement, however, may set in motion either fissioning or factionalism. If the *principales* neglect to continue the process of initiating new improvements, another kin group assumes a competitive status by becoming initiators of additional facilities in the same settlement. This usually occurs at the time when the *principales* have not yet established kinship relations with neighboring households. The first status holders, however, may retain control over the facilities that they originated, while the competitors direct activities at the new facilities. Tension and strife resulting from factionalism is usually expressed by verbal criticism of what each other is doing. This tension may be reduced by allowing members of the opposing group to participate in different activities at the various facilities. For example, in a patronal festival the first *principales* may be in charge of the *fiesta del padre* (the priest's feast); that is, the religious events associated with the chapel that they introduced. The competing faction will then be in charge of the *fiesta de calle* (street feast); the mundane festivities in the dance hall that they introduced. Or, the first group works with missionary programs, while the second group works with government programs. Or, factions may alternate introducing different facilities: one year one group initiates a plastic piping aqueduct and two years later the rival group initiates the health center. The ultimate results benefit all since the population of a settlement is not big enough to allow for reduplication of facilities at the same site, except for every small retail stores. Government programs, particularly, operate on the basis of population census data, which act as limiting factors for the number of facilities.

To sum up, the *principales* of a settlement are the members of the extended family that originates a nucleus of community symbols that include a basic triangle of store, school, and chapel. These facilities are gathering sites of assemblage that define and identify the members of a settlement by their participation in activities at these sites. Members of a settlement are also identified by their participation in the *fagina* (task). This is the communal labor to cut the vegetation at the nucleus, the main trails leading to the nucleus, and at the cemetery. Cohesion among the households in a settlement is enhanced by the fact that there are kin connections. In other words, the system of *principales* is a kin based network which has the capacity of incorporating neighboring households by making them members of a corporate kin whole or by a series of relationships and activities accomplished in a commensal way for the welfare of all. To the extent that the neighboring households are *respaldantes* (supporters) of the facilities introduced by the *principales*, the latter acquire identity at the expense of the former especially during the initial years of the process. The capability to establish connections with the outside, of a contributory kind, is an essential element of the system of *principales*. This is done through key members who serve in positions within bureaucratic and ecclesiastical institutions.

This model does not answer relevant questions posed by the variable of population in terms of numbers and density. What is the population base that is optimum for a settlement under the present conditions of swidden agriculture for subsistence and market exchange? Does fissioning occur after a certain number of people is reached?⁷ What is the population base that is optimum for any one of the facilities and activities at these assemblages? In other words, do the nature of the facilities, the

organization of activities, and their frequency depend on a certain human density for face-to-face relations to occur? The data gathered only suggest that up to 1950 a nucleus with the basic triangle of community symbols served a more extensive territory with less human density. Since then, the territory affiliated with a nucleus has decreased in size as the number of people and nuclei have increased.

The data also suggest that there is a correlation between the order of the children and the role they play in the extended family unit, with potential lines of cleavage between the first and last children while middle children are "thrown away" to act as intermediaries with the outside world. More research would be needed to confirm whether this is a manifestation of the oft-cited psychological syndrome of the number and order of children, or whether it is related to the structure and organization of contemporary swidden agriculturalists involved in a cash economy, as a similar situation appears to occur among the *milperos* of the Petén of Guatemala (Schwartz 1977:26-27).⁸

Conclusions, Scenarios, Suggestions

The system of *principales* is a system of community development based on the structure and function of a corporate family unit. In other words, it is a kinship system based on the dynamics of socio-economic mobility of the extended family. Nowadays, one often hears and reads that to merely indicate the relevance of kinship is not enough in anthropological advice for development planners and policy-makers. The social dynamics of kinship networks, nevertheless, are a real, empirical fact grounded on the rural life-world. It would be unrealistic, therefore, to

disregard the development accomplished by the *principales* in the Isthmian Atlantic region of the Lower Coast. Government and missionary programs have been facilitated by the fortuitous use of the system of *principales*.

Indigenous development for the *Naturales* has meant in this century establishing a series of nuclei that incorporate a triangle of basic community symbols: a retail store, a formal primary school, a Catholic chapel. Other areas of social differentiation that are visible by symbol or artifact (Young and Fujimoto 1965) may subsequently be added to the nucleus. The additions include such things as a dance hall, a softball field, a health center, a coffee shelling and buying station, a seminar-boarding center, an artesian well and water pump or a plastic piping aqueduct for potable water. Travelling in a canoe up the Rio Indio, from Boca de Rio Indio to Boca de Uracillo 26 km inland, one can observe nine nuclei of community symbols on the east and west banks of the river.

Since the *Naturales* perceive these nuclei as improvements in the social and economic activities and functions of their society or situation, the system of *principales* is an indigenous system of "development from below," as defined by Pitt (1976a:8-9). By initiating these improvements, or at least capturing some of the resources from the transisthmian urban center, an extended family achieves the status of *principales* of the settlement according to local standards in the rural setting. The process can also be interpreted as one of establishing the "social order," as defined by Wagley (1971). This is the organization of life into recognized patterns of interaction which, once established, persist until conditions change. The process follows an order of action in which there are those who originate and sanction actions, the *principales* (principals), and those who respond and back the actions, the *respaldantes* (supporters). It is,

therefore, a process of "set events," as defined by Chapple and Coon (1942). These are events in which a group of persons habitually originate action to a number of others who respond.

The supporters, however, are not passive but active contributors with ideas and opinions in the same way that all members of the extended family are free to participate in the family decision-making processes. It is a process akin to what Arensberg (n.d.) has metaphorically described as a cybernetic flow of human interactions, with inputs of goods and energies, with assembly and decision, and with output and concerted action. Arensberg (n.d.) extends the flow to demonstrate the rise of a pyramid of authority and its institutional echelons. In the system of *principales*, however, authority and status are not vested in a single individual.⁹ The *principales* distribute authority among a number of different individuals, male and female, transgenerationally. These key members have differential roles in the economic, religious, and political spheres in the same manner that members of the extended family have differential roles divided among older, middle, and younger siblings.

The system of *principales* is not a redistributive system of goods and services. Improvements initiated by the *principales* in a settlement represent a creative acquisition of goods and services for all rather than a redistribution. The system of *principales* is commensal in that all who participate in the activities of the facilities originated by the *principales* are sharing in the goods and services available at the facilities, such as credit in the store; formal primary education for the children in the school; the blessings, food, and merriment of the patronal festival that is associated with the chapel. This participation and sharing gives identity to the members of a community (Kimball 1980 b).

The competitive nature of the system of *principales* increases and extends goods and services over a wide range of the population. This competition may trigger fissioning and establishment of new nuclei of settlements. It may also give rise to factionalism within the same settlement. Fissioning and factionalism, nevertheless, keep pace with economic and demographic growth, adding and extending commensal facilities to a greater number of people and maintaining the rural socio-economy in equilibrium (Gross 1973).

Ethnosemantically, the term *principales* refers to what may be a traditional system of extended family organization that possibly includes structural features of pre-Columbian and colonial periods. It has not been the intent of this chapter, however, to present "a timeless 'traditional' cultural system . . . as the antithesis of 'modernization' " (Forman and Riegelhaupt 1979:397). The system of *principales* is part of the modernization process and must be incorporated "within the broader structure of resource dispersal within the national (or regional) political system" (Forman and Riegelhaupt 1979:397), and the international system as well. In other words, the sociolinguistic extension of the term *principales* to apply to the formation of settlements of *Naturales* in the Lower Coast is largely a phenomenon of the republican era of Panamá in the 20th century. The triangle of basic community symbols--store, school, chapel--and additional appendages are all part of socio-economic processes that have occurred in the Lower Coast in this century and the participation of the *Naturales* in these processes.

The first retail stores in the Lower Coast were those set up by Chinese storekeepers at the mouths of the rivers on the coast in the first quarter of this century during the vegetable ivory nut (*Phytelephas* see-

manni Cook), rubber (*Castilla panamensis* Cook), and turtle shell (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) "time of value," the phrase used by *Naturales* and *Playeros* for cash booms (July 1979 b). The *Naturales* and *Playeros* learned to participate in the international market economy by exchanging cash products for imported products at these Chinese retail shops. During the first banana boom in the 1930s (July 1979 a), the *Playeros* first and then the *Naturales* displaced the Chinese as *negociantes* (business entrepreneurs).

Formal, public, primary schooling in the Lower Coast arose during the republican era of Panamá in this century. In the 1920s, a few primary school teachers were appointed by the government among the *Playeros* and *Naturales* in widely dispersed areas. In the 1940s, a few more appointments were made. In the 1960s and '70s, the number of teachers increased as a result of an excess of high-school graduates who were educated in urban centers and were qualified to serve as teachers. Concomitantly, school buildings proliferated as a result of international monetary assistance of the United States Agency for International Development in the program known in Panamá as the *siembra de escuelas* (planting of schools).

The first visits by Catholic Claretian missionary priests to the Lower Coast and the building of chapels at the river mouths on the coast occurred in the 1920s (Pujadas 1976). These missionary priests first travelled to the Lower Coast in the import-export boats that collected the cash crops and distributed imported merchandise.

The additional appendages to the nucleus of community symbols arose in the 1960s and '70s in great measure as a result of international monetary assistance to both government and missionary agencies.

The system of *principales* as a development process for corporate kin settlements may have seen its rise and fall in this century. There are

limits to the viability of such a system of physical mobility and localization at new sites. The limiting factors are population, space, and resources. In other words, the system is viable as long as there are space and resources for increasing numbers of people. The population of *Naturales* is increasing, among other reasons, as a result of malaria control and vaccination against whooping cough and tuberculosis, although measles is still an epidemic killer among this group of people. Population increase of the *Naturales*, however, has depended largely on the natural life cycle and has occurred at a slower pace than the faster strategic migration of the *Interioranos* from the Pacific side into the Lower Coast. This is reflected in the difference in the density of 5 persons per km² in the area west of the Rio Indio occupied mostly by *Naturales* and *Playeros* in contrast to the 24 persons per km² east of the Indio where the migrants have settled first and impinge upon *Naturales* and *Playeros*.

In terms of resources, there is a limit to the number of stores and schools that the *principales* can initiate. Setting up a store depends on profits from cash products. The stores are, in fact, the exchange centers for these products. They are subject to the vagaries and inflationary tendencies of the international world economy which limits the number of those who can invest capital in such a system. The appointment of school teachers and building of schools depends on the national budget for education. This is used mainly for schools in urban centers. In addition, school teachers educated in urban centers develop an urban world view and are not interested, with few exceptions, in working in rural areas.

What future scenarios are foreseen for the system of *principales* of the *Naturales*? The system may be abandoned by an increased rural to urban migration as has occurred with some of the *Cholos* on the Pacific slope of

the Continental Divide (Frazier 1976). The *Naturales* may get into another civil war or participate in revitalization movements, which are events that have also occurred among them in this century. They may organize "secondary coaxes" (Adams 1981), and there is evidence that the cooperative of coffee growers initiated by the missionaries is already serving such a function. Agriculture may be intensified with shorter swidden cycles as has occurred in other parts of the world (Boserup 1965), and there is evidence that some *Naturales* have decreased swidden cycles from 20 to 8 and 7 years. Agriculture may be industrialized and the *Naturales* proletarianized as has occurred with some of the *Interioranos* employed in the production of sugar cane on the Pacific side of Panamá (Gudeman 1978). This is also occurring at the palm oil plantation of Icacal on the east bank of the mouth of the Rio Indio which employs mainly *Interioranos* plus some *Naturales*, *Playeros*, and *Cuna* and *Guaymí* Indians. Lured by bank loans into cattle production, the *Naturales* may be caught up in the same migrant process of the *Interioranos*: that of continuously moving on while establishing extensive cattle production for the benefit of big capital investors in the national and international beef marketing system.

In terms of the latter scenario, the *Naturales* and the agricultural development agencies might be better off by intensifying the production of small animals—chickens, ducks, turkeys, pigs—for subsistence and marketing. There has always been a great demand for small animals in the urban transisthmian center and this has also been a regular source of animal protein for the *Naturales* and *Playeros*, along with fish from the rivers and the sea. In the 1970s, both *Naturales* and *Playeros* have been successfully running a black market of *puercos brujos* (witch hogs) that are in great demand because of the rising prices of beef in the transisthmian

urban center. National agricultural development programs, however, hardly pay attention to the production of small animals. Among other reasons, this is partly due to the fact that women and children are the ones mainly in charge of small animals, even though they do not do the marketing of these animals.

Finally, and most importantly, the *Naturales* and the development agencies may be made aware that the system of *principales* does have positive characteristics in its favor even though it may not continue being viable for extending population over the region. First, the system of *principales* has allowed the *Naturales* to have some degree of socio-economic control over their settlements without sacrificing subsistence production of food. Secondly, it has given the *Naturales* an opportunity to negotiate what they want in developing themselves. Third, the competitive nature of the system has extended throughout several settlements such facilities as schools, health centers, and potable water, even though the quality of the services that they receive from outside personnel often employed in these facilities leaves much to be desired.

It is hoped that the *principales* may continue using these strengths to effectively protect or negotiate their position in terms of their settlements, usufruct rights, projects, status, and honor. This is particularly important in view of such development plans as a sea level canal through this region (Ventocilla 1980), which will require the eviction of people from their lands as occurred with the construction of the Panamá Canal at the beginning of this century and with the Bayano Dam on the Pacific side of the Isthmus in the 1970s (Wali 1980). As long as people are aware of their own strengths and how they can use them, there is hope of not becoming "pyramids of sacrifice" (Berger 1976) for the sake of international political economies in the contemporary world.

Notes

1 The boundaries of the "inadjudicative tract of land" were as follows:

Departing from the confluence of the rivers Toabré and Coclé del Norte, in direct line to meet mount Miguel, and from there in direct line to the confluence of the rivers Jobo and Indio, up the Indio and south as far as mount Negro, and from there in direct line to mount Chichibalf, and from there in direct line to the slopes of Marica, and from there to mount Sumbador, and from there to the headwaters of the Cascajal river, down this river until the Coclé river, and from there to the mouth of the Toabré on the same Coclé river, which is the point of departure. (Inciso Octavo, Artículo 91, Ley 20 de 1913, Decreto 44 del 27 de junio de 1914; translation mine).

2 Most *Naturales* store papers that they consider important in boxes somewhere in their houses. Someone who had signed this petition showed me a copy of it.

3 According to some *Naturales*, right after the revolutionary government took over in 1968, there came up the Rio Indio some armed outsiders who are described as "Spanish" and who took refuge in the mountainous zone seeking the support of the *Naturales* against the military government. Some *Naturales*, therefore, perceived as part of the military surveillance of the Continental Divide the installation of two *asentamientos campesinos* (planned agricultural settlements) at the headwaters of the two principal river systems in the Lower Coast. These were the *asentamientos* located at Las Marias at the headwaters of the Rio Indio and at Coclesito at the headwaters of the Coclé del Norte river system.

4 In this regard, the nativistic movements of the *Naturales* of the Lower Coast are similar to the *Mama Chi* nativism of the western *Guaymí* of Panamá as described and analyzed by Philip Young (1978). The *Mama Chi* nativism also arose when the *Guaymí* were threatened by outside economic forces. The unionization of workers in the United Fruit banana plantations limited the participation of the *Guaymí* as temporary laborers, as the union required permanent employment. The *Guaymí* preferred to migrate seasonally as temporary laborers and return annually to their lands in the mountains. *Mama Chi* forbade the *Guaymí* to work in the banana plantations.

5 The "festive" or "urban" *sombrero pintado* (painted hat) is made from the Panamahat palm (*Carludovica palmata*). The "work" hat is made from the flatsedge (*Cyperus* spp.).

6 This contrasts with the situation reported for Ecuador, where the highland *mestizos* have greater political power than the lowland coastal blacks (Whitten 1965). It also reflects the political and economic pressures that blacks and mulattoes have exerted in the urban transisthmian center of Panamá since the second half of the 18th century (Figueroa Navarro 1978:79-100), as well as the greater geographical accessibility of the littoral zone versus the inland mountainous zone in the Lower Coast.

7 Bernard and Killworth (1979) have postulated that fissioning of population could be accounted for by mathematical calculations of population figures and density within certain technological conditions.

8 Schwartz (1977:26-27) reports the following for the *milperos* of the Guatemalan Petén:

The eldest brother in a family serves as the father's lieutenant, although his authority over the other children is not as great as that of mother. If father dies, he may become a surrogate father for his youngest siblings since step-parents, by definition, can never love a child the way a parent would. The older brother role is a difficult one. For example, older brothers may "correct" the conduct of younger siblings, but they must be careful not to go too far and continually "scold" them; that is father's right, and it is not clear how much of this right he delegates to the older brother. In addition, the oldest brother often lives in greater proximity to parents than other children. In San Andres, a father obtains a house site from the municipal authorities for his adult sons, and he then builds them a house on that site. Even if a man builds his own house, he will say "This is the house my father gave me." In fact, fathers find it convenient to "give" sons houses close to their own, but the availability of sites and the death of fathers before all the sons are married means that it is usually the oldest son who lives close to father. Father's own house is normally inherited by the youngest son, so middle children live furthest from their parents; it is almost as if the oft-cited syndrome of the neglected middle child is expressed in the spatial arrangement of houses in San Andres.

9 This contrasts with the Big Man system of New Guinea (Forge 1972).

CHAPTER III

A CASE HISTORY: THE *PRINCIPALES* OF SANTA ROSA DE RIO INDIO

The case history of the settlement of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio will be presented in this chapter to illustrate the model of the structure and dynamics of the *principales* as covered in the preceding chapter. This historical account of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio is a compendium of the census data and the oral economic histories of the households that identify themselves as members of this settlement by participating in the events at its nucleus. This history covers a period of thirty years, from the late 1940s to the late 1970s. In the 20th century, many settlements like Santa Rosa fissioned off and moved further down the Atlantic slope from parent settlements that are located in the heartland of the Coclé Reservation in the Lower Coast. The movement coincides with a series of economic booms whereby cash products were sold at the mouth of the river, plus the heightened activities of missionary and government agencies in setting up chapels and schools in the inland zone.

Location, Demography, Economics, Government

Santa Rosa de Rio Indio is a settlement of *Naturales*. The nucleus of community symbols and seven permanent and eight temporary houses is located on the east bank of the Rio Indio at about 9°03' of latitude and 80°12' of longitude (See Map 1.1 for relative location).¹ This is 16 km south or upriver from the *Playero* settlement of Boca de Rio Indio at the

mouth of the river by the seashore at about $9^{\circ}12'$ of latitude and $80^{\circ}12'$ of longitude (See Map 1.1 for relative location).

The facilities which become community symbols as they encompass the varied participation of those who consider themselves members of the settlement include a primary public school, a Catholic chapel, a retail store, a cemetery, a softball field, a dance hall, a health center, and a plastic piping aqueduct. These are more than traits as they reflect activities associated with a settlement. In addition, Santa Rosa is the site of an *asentamiento campesino*, a planned agricultural program of the Ministry of Agricultural Development. It is also the headquarters, and principal buying and shelling station for the *Cooperativa Luz Campesina* (Cooperative Light of the Countryfolk). This is a cooperative of essentially coffee growers initiated by Catholic Claretian missionary priests. The Claretian missionaries have also built at the nucleus a seminar center called *Cristo Campesino* (Christ the Countryman).

The 33 households that identify themselves with this nucleus live and have work sites in a territory of about 20 km^2 . This area is roughly bounded on the north by the *Cerro* (hill) and *Quebrada* (stream) of *La Pólvora*; on the south by the *Quebrada La Puerca Gorda* and the *Quebrada El Berraco*; on the east by the *Quebradas de Limón*, *Lagartero*, and *Guarapo*; and on the west by the *Rio Indio*. Two of the households also have work sites on the west bank of the *Rio Indio*. The 33 households in this territory comprise a population of 174 inhabitants (98 females and 77 males). Ninety-six of the inhabitants, that is 55 per cent of the population, are under age fifteen. Twenty-five of the 33 households are related by consanguinity or affinity to the kindred of the *principales*. The others are migrant *Interioranos* to whom the *principales* granted permission to settle

within the boundaries of the settlement in order to let the children attend the school at Santa Rosa.

Seven households that include key members of the kindred of the *principales* reside permanently in houses at the nucleus of the settlement. They also have houses away from the nucleus, near to their work sites. Eight additional households have temporary houses at the nucleus, which they occupy during school days and feast days. Their permanent houses are near to their work sites. Five of these eight temporary households at the nucleus are related by consanguinity or affinity with the kindred of the *principales*.

The average annual cash income per household in 1978-79 was US\$900. This cash came mainly from the sale of livestock (US\$500) and coffee (US\$300), plus miscellaneous cash rendering activities and contributions from members employed in urban centers (US\$100). The marketing of products occurred at irregular intervals throughout the year. This meant that when these products were sold, the cash had to be saved and budgeted to cover expenses for prolonged periods and the role of women as guardians of the house was important in safekeeping this cash. Miscellaneous cash rendering activities for males included operating motorboats, carpentry and boat-building, the making of handicrafts, baking bread, and temporary wage labor. Sewing, harvesting coffee, and cooking for school teachers were cash rendering activities for women. All households produced the subsistence staples of rice, manioc, and bananas, plus seasonal fruits. Corn was also cultivated for seasonal subsistence, but was mostly stored to feed chickens and pigs that were in the care of women and children. Chickens were mainly produced for household consumption, while pigs were mostly sold to local intermediaries who specialized in the marketing of

swine. Marketing was done by men, on Thursdays, at the *Playero* settlement of Boca de Rio Indio and in the city of Colón. Products marketed at the mouth of the Rio Indio were sold to buyers who came from the urban trans-isthmian center. Marketing at the city was usually done on a biweekly basis that coincided with the paydays for urban employees at the middle and the end of the month. (See Appendix II for the volume of the Thursday marketing at the mouth of the Rio Indio from September to November 1978.)

Expenses at the retail store, mostly on credit, averaged US\$30 per month per household to cover the cost of kerosene; batteries for flashlights and transistor radios; laundry and bathing soap; food condiments like sugar, salt, pepper, onion, tomato paste; flour; cooking oil; toilet paper; personal and veterinary medicines; candies, cookies, and sodas. Since the harvest of rice usually does not last throughout the year, most households also bought rice during an average of three months out of the year. In 1978-79 the cost of rice at the retail store ranged between 23 and 25 cents per pound. The daily consumption of rice, which is considered to be the "real" food, averaged two pounds per day per household for the late afternoon meal which is considered to be the main meal of the day.

In 1978-79, four households at Santa Rosa received an average monthly salary of US\$100. Those having salaried employment included a male storekeeper for the retail store of the *asentamiento campesino*, the male accountant for the *Cooperativa Luz Campesina*, the male health assistant for the Integrated Health System of the Ministry of Health, and the female coordinator of the Claretian missionary program for The Promotion of the Countrywoman. The old man who guarded the cooperative shelling and buying station received a monthly salary of US\$30. Members of the cooperative who worked at the shelling and buying station from December through May

during the coffee harvest received a commission of ten per cent of the total amount of coffee that each had shelled and bought. The *Regidor*, who is a municipal tax collector for the butchering tax of livestock, received a commission of ten per cent of the annual total of taxes that he had turned over to the Municipal Treasurer. Five households had outboard motorboats that provided weekly passenger and cargo transportation service as a supplementary cash rendering activity. Two households had male members who specialized as intermediaries in the marketing of livestock, one dealing in swine and the other in bovine animals. Two households had male members who were serving as police officers in the city of Colón and made cash contributions to their parents residing in Santa Rosa. One household had a male member who worked as a bulldozer operator in Panamá City and who also made an annual cash contribution to his parents. Three households had female members who worked as house servants in the cities of Colón and Panamá, and they also made cash contributions to their parents and grandparents.

In the governmental bureaucratic structure established by the 1972 Constitution, Santa Rosa de Rio Indio is one of the 12 *Regidurías/Juntas Locales* in the *Corregimiento/Junta Comunal* of La Encantada, in the *Distrito/Consejo Municipal* of Chagres, in the province of Colón. As members of a *Corregimiento*, residents at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio participated in the 1972 and 1978 elections for Representatives to the National Assembly of Representatives of *Corregimientos*. The first Representative of the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada to the first assembly established in 1972 was one of the *principales* of Santa Rosa. For his services in the first assembly he was awarded a monthly salary for life of US\$300.

Origins and Dynamics of the Principales of Santa Rosa

Movement and Localization at a New Site

In 1947, Rosa Madrid and Eleuteria Rodríguez and their extended family decided to move ten kilometers downriver. They moved from El Barrero de Río Indio, 1.5 km southeast of Boca de Uracillo (8°58' lat., 80°11' long.), to Los Buhos, the site of the present nucleus of Santa Rosa. They bought the usufruct rights of Los Buhos (The Owls) for US\$200 from an old man who was living there by himself and who decided to move further downriver.

At that time Rosa was 58 and Teya 48 years old. Their extended family included five living children of the 12 they had had. Three of these five were already married and had children of their own. Those who moved with Rosa and Teya initially included a 33-year-old daughter, her second husband, and her son and three daughters by her first husband; a 24-year-old son and his 26-year-old wife and two infant daughters; a 15-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter, both single at that time. Their 22-year-old son with his 17-year-old wife and baby daughter remained at El Barrero. By not moving, they retained the usufruct rights at El Barrero and could wait to see how the others fared with the move.

Several factors stimulated the move. First and foremost, they decided to take advantage of the second banana boom which began after World War II (July 1979 a, b). During World War II, the two older sons had gone to the Panamá Canal to work as contract wage laborers with the United States Army. They returned to El Barrero with an amount of cash, which the family decided to invest in buying Los Buhos and planting 4000 banana stems there. Furthermore, at that time dugout canoes were used without outboard

motors and paddling was easier from a downriver site. El Barrero was 26.5 km distant from the mouth of the Rio Indio, whereas Los Buhos was only 16 km from the river's mouth where the banana exporting launches came to buy the cash product.

There were also other reasons for Rosa and Teya to move. Their oldest daughter had been sick frequently. A *maestro curioso* (curious teacher, that is, medicine man) had shown Rosa that his daughter's husband had buried in the floor of the house several vials with black magic potions. Upon being confronted with this evidence, the daughter's husband killed the medicine man, ran away, was apprehended and jailed by the authorities, and then killed himself while in prison. It was not good to continue living where such evil events had occurred.

Additionally, Rosa's paternal kindred had declined in their status as *principales* at Boca de Uracillo. El Barrero, where Rosa lived, is a section of Boca de Uracillo. When at age 18 Rosa left his mother's brother at San Miguel and moved east to Rio Indio to live with his father's brother,² this paternal uncle was then regarded as one of the *principales* at Rio Indio. Through the political influence of his wife's relatives in Penonomé, Rosa's uncle had in the first quarter of this century sponsored and initiated the construction of a primary school at Palma Real (1.5 km north, or downriver, from Boca de Uracillo) on the west bank of the Rio Indio.

Rosa's paternal kindred at Rio Indio, however, failed to keep up their status as *principales* economically and educationally. During the 1930s and '40s, another family from further upriver moved to the present site of Boca de Uracillo. By becoming intermediaries in the marketing of rubber, chickens, and pigs, and setting up a retail store, this new family

grew in economic status. They also took advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the primary school, and decided to have two of their male members continue with their secondary education so that they would thus become school teachers. When the new teachers had been duly trained and one of them secured a political appointment as *Corregidor*, this family decided to initiate the move of the school from Palma Real to Boca de Uracillo and employ the new teachers there. At the same time, this family decided to sponsor and initiate the construction of a Catholic chapel, close to the new school. With these activities, they became the new *principales* at Boca de Uracillo, and Rosa's kindred declined from their former high status even though Rosa and his children later became *principales* themselves at Santa Rosa. Rosa's and Teya's middle children still regret that, after completing their primary education at Palma Real, they were not sent away to continue secondary education at Penonomé to become school teachers also.

The Store

Rosa's and Teya's extended family fared well by their move downriver and settlement at Los Buhos. As soon as their new banana plants began to generate cash, the oldest son entered into a partnership in 1951 with a *Playero* entrepreneur from Boca de Rio Indio. The *Playero* had a general merchandise retail store and a liquor store at Boca de Rio Indio. These stores were supplied by the banana exporting companies, that were actually import-export businesses in the port city of Colón. Larger purchases lowered wholesale prices of the import-export companies and meant greater profits for the *Playero*. He, therefore, proposed to Rosa's and Teya's son to set up a retail store at Los Buhos. The *Playero* would provide an

initial capital of US\$500 and would order the supplies for the store. Rosa's and Teya's son would build the new store, pay the fee to obtain a government permit for the store, and would continue replenishing the store with capital obtained from the sale of bananas. This partnership lasted until 1961 when Rosa's and Teya's son bought out his *Playero* partner for US\$500.

On the way to Colón to get the permit for the new store, Rosa's and Teya's son decided to name the store *Santa Rosa* (Saint Rose). This was in honor, not of the saint, but of his father who had been so named because he was born on August 30, the feast day of Saint Rose of Lima.³ Residents in the surrounding area who patronized the new store would say, "We are going to Santa Rosa," when they made a shopping trip. Thus the name Los Buhos was dropped and Santa Rosa became the new name of the site where Rosa's and Teya's extended family lived, worked, and began to grow in numbers and in socio-economic importance.

It is metaphorically significant that the name of the store is a symbol of identity that telescopes the nature of the nucleus of a settlement of *Naturales*. The name *Santa Rosa* telescopes the interaction of the Catholic Church (the saint's name), kin (father's name), and economics (the store's name).

The Political Involvement

The Corregidor

The partnership with the *Playero* proved beneficial in other ways. A brother of the *Playero* was appointed mayor of the district of Chagres in the early 1950s. He sought people whom he could trust for the positions of *Corregidores* in the subdivisions of the district in the hinter-

land of the *Naturales*, which comprises the greatest expanse of the district. A smooth functioning of the *Corregidurías* is essential in the government bureaucracy as the *Corregidor* is in charge of several tasks: vital statistics, collection of certain taxes, issuance of certain permits, administration of justice in certain cases, dissemination of policies and programs, and coordination during political elections.

The *Playero* entrepreneur asked his *Natural* partner, Rosa's and Teya's oldest son, to act as *Corregidor* for his brother the Mayor. This would be in the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada of which Santa Rosa is a part. Rosa's and Teya's oldest son declined the position for himself, but recommended instead his brother who had remained behind at El Barrero. He considered that his middle sibling had been educated more than he had and was, therefore, better qualified to hold a public position. Besides, the economic enterprises at the new site had proven successful and it was no longer necessary to hold on to the usufruct rights at El Barrero.

Thus, in the early 1950s, Rosa's and Teya's kindred began their political involvement with the appointment of a second generation middle sibling as *Corregidor* of La Encantada. At the same time, the storekeeper became the *Regidor* of Santa Rosa, thus keeping political control over the home settlement also.

The position of *Corregidor* of La Encantada was held by Rosa's and Teya's middle son almost consecutively until 1970, regardless of which political power was in control of the government bureaucracy. He would be out of office for brief periods of 15 or 30 days whenever there was a change in political control, and then someone would come looking for him to restore him to the position. This reflects the opportunist involvement of both *Naturales* and *Playeros* in politics, rather than as a permanent

commitment to a single party. Opportunism is necessary if any bit of the minimal government attention to rural areas is to continue trickling to the countryside. This behavior confirms what has been stated elsewhere:

When in conflict, peasant involvement is likely to be opportunist (on the side most likely to win) rather than the product of an ideological current, and may change frequently. Protection of village, property, status, and honour may be even more significant (Pitt 1976a:125).

The Mayor

During the first half of the 1960s, Rosa's and Teya's middle son was promoted from *Corregidor* to Mayor of the district of Chagres. This is the first and only time that a *Natural*, not a *Playero*, has held the position of Mayor in the Lower Coast. Rosa's and Teya's son, however, was Mayor for only six months and was demoted to *Corregidor* again. *Playeros* residing in the urban transisthmian center exerted pressure, through the newspapers, to remove him from this position. The newspapers referred to him as a *montuno*, a disrespectful term used by urbanites against countryfolk that implies the backwardness and ignorance of the countryfolk.

The Representative to the National Assembly

While again serving as *Corregidor*, Rosa's and Teya's middle son participated in October 11, 1971, in a meeting in Panamá City, where General Torrijos met with all the *Corregidores* of the republic. At this meeting General Torrijos stated that there would be elections in the *Corregimientos* in August 1972 to select a National Assembly of Representatives from the 505 *Corregimientos*. Rosa's and Teya's middle son initially declined to launch himself as a candidate in the election, even though he

was encouraged to do so by several government officials. He changed his mind at a meeting in his home settlement of Santa Rosa when one of his nephews, the oldest son of his oldest sister, spoke in favor of supporting his candidacy. He won the election in the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada and became a member of the first National Assembly of Representatives of *Corregimientos* that ratified the 1972 Constitution. He now enjoys a lifetime pension for having participated in this assembly.

As a result of the 1972 Constitution, Santa Rosa now has a *Junta Local*, the lowest form of an administrative council. The President of the *Junta Local* of Santa Rosa is the oldest son of Rosa's and Teya's youngest daughter, and the Treasurer is the oldest son of Rosa's and Teya's oldest daughter. Both men represent the third generation of *principales* at Santa Rosa.

The Importance of Political Involvement

There are two important aspects of the participation of Rosa's and Teya's middle son in existing political institutions. First, he and his kindred regard his service in politics as a career whereby he had the opportunity to use his talent for speech. Fluency in public speaking is highly valued by the *Playeros*. Perhaps this is why Rosa's and Teya's son was able to maintain continuous political relations with the Afro-Hispanic political gatekeepers in the Lower Coast. Ironically, *Playeros* and urbanites have the impression that the *Naturales* are not good public speakers. This misconception is due to the behavior of the *Naturales* in public meetings in front of outsiders whom they do not know. In public meetings, the *Naturales* will usually remain silent for a long time and let the outsider speak continuously without interruptions or comments. After the meeting

is over, however, the *Naturales* will discuss the outsider's speech and the issues at stake endlessly among themselves. When they do speak in public in front of unknown outsiders, the *Naturales* may often conceal direct meaning by the use of proverbs that may confuse those who do not belong to the regional speech community and do not know the meanings of the proverbs. Among themselves, however, the *Naturales* give to each person the opportunity to express him or herself in sequence. This often prolongs the meeting for considerable periods of time. This respect for and recognition of each individual in public is also reflected when encountering and greeting two or more people, whereby each person in the group is greeted individually by name rather than greeting the group as a whole.

Secondly, and most importantly, Rosa's and Teya's middle son acquired knowledge about how the governmental bureaucracy operates, and was able to use that knowledge in his role as intermediary in their indigenous process of development. This is clearly expressed in the following transcription of an excerpt of an interview with Rosa's and Teya's middle son:

. . . then this position was a school for me, because I was not only reaching for those jobs for the money but to, ah, . . . acquire more knowledge about what the political life was all about and about what it was to defend my own interests and those of the others. Then I came about with an experience more deeply rooted when I became Mayor, and I met with the people in Santa Rosa and we formed . . . we formed a society that we called Agricultural and Cattle Raising Society. (Translation mine.)

The indigenous process of development by the *principales* of Santa Rosa was thus enhanced by the involvement of Rosa's and Teya's middle son in the existing political institutions.

The Participation in Sports

Soon after Rosa's and Teya's middle son was appointed as *Corregidor* in the early 1950s, Santa Rosa organized its first Sports Society. It thus took advantage of the monies set aside in the municipal budget for sports, to buy equipment and uniforms for sports teams. For the first four years, the Santa Rosa team played in the softball league of the *Naturales* in the upriver settlements of Boca de Uracillo, San Cristobal, Los Uveros, Las Marías, and Cerro Miguel. Later the Santa Rosa team became integrated with the softball league of the *Playeros* in the district of Donoso. The *Playero* partner of the Santa Rosa store provided lodging and food at his house in Boca de Rio Indio whenever the Santa Rosa team went downriver to play with the *Playeros*. Since then the Santa Rosa team has alternated playing in the leagues of both *Naturales* and *Playeros*.

Nowadays softball games are a regular event on Sundays in the dry season and on feast days in the settlements of both *Naturales* and *Playeros*. These games are perceived as an improvement in the *asunto social* (social affairs) of the settlements. Alcoholic beverages at feast days stimulate the appearance of long forgotten disputes within or between families that end in fistfights. Softball games are perceived as ritualized and re-directed aggression, minimizing the fighting. In the 1970s, however, there have been many deaths incurred in knife-fights. The *Interioranos* have introduced this modality of fighting with knives, and both *Naturales* and *Playeros* are concerned about this.

The School

With the appointment of Rosa's and Teya's sons as *Corregidor* and *Regidor* in the early 1950s, Rosa's and Teya's kindred tried to get a primary

school built in their settlement. Their many requests to the Ministry of Education went unheeded for almost a decade. There was already a school at El Jobo, directly across the river from Santa Rosa, where the people from Santa Rosa sent their children. The school teacher at El Jobo, a *Natural* from the upriver settlement of Las Marías, reported to the ministry that the school population in the area did not warrant another school. El Jobo, however, is in the province of Coclé. At that time that school was under the Provincial Inspection of Education in Penonomé, the capital of Coclé on the Pacific plains. This meant that the parents of children at the El Jobo school had to take turns every month to go on a 4-day hike across the Continental Divide to collect the school mail at Penonomé. The people at Santa Rosa felt that it would be more convenient for them to have a school on their side of the river, which is in the province of Colón. The Provincial Inspection of Education in the city of Colón was much closer. Nowadays all the schools in the Lower Coast are under the Inspection at Colón for the reason of greater geographical accessibility. In addition, it appeared that the Inspection in Colón provided better school furniture and more supplies than the Inspection in Penonomé, which was too distant to transport school materials and equipment overland.

In the early 1960s, the *principales* of Santa Rosa enlisted the support of a *Playero* woman who was a school teacher at Boca de Rio Indio, and whose brother was then the Provincial Inspector of Education in Colón. On February 28, 1962, a Presidential Decree appointed, for the first time, a primary school teacher at Santa Rosa, to begin classes on May 1, 1962. The school first functioned in a wooden building built by Rosa's and Teya's oldest son, who is regarded as one of the best house and boat builders in the region. In the late 1960s, Rosa's and Teya's middle son acting as

Corregidor got the support of the Provincial Director in Colón of the General Directorate of Community Development to build a concrete school.

As Representative to the National Assembly, Rosa's and Teya's middle son tried in the 1970s to get at Santa Rosa a boarding Basic Production School (Isos 1977). This is a vocational middle school. He failed to get the funds appropriated. The greater political power of the *Playeros* within the Ministry of Education exerted pressures to have two Basic Production Schools built at Boca de Rio Indio and Palmas Bellas, only 12 km apart from each other and connected by a coastal highway. Rosa's and Teya's son argued that Santa Rosa, 16 km upriver, had worse transportation problems for the children in upriver settlements to commute downriver to attend these schools. At a meeting of the Provincial Council of Coordination, Rosa's and Teya's son was shamed by the Provincial Inspector of Education in Colón, who publicly stated that the *Naturales* were destructive with their school buildings. He then produced a photograph and a newspaper article on the destruction of the roof of a school at the settlement of La Nueva Unión, immediately south or upriver from Santa Rosa, on the east bank of the Rio Indio. The roof had been destroyed by people from El Dominical, the settlement directly opposite to La Nueva Unión, on the west bank of the Rio Indio. The *principales* at El Dominical were trying to split the school population at La Nueva Unión in order to have a school built at El Dominical.

The merits of this case are that the bureaucratic urbanites failed to understand the order of action in the dynamics of the system of *principales*. Splitting a school population or moving the site of a school is a strategy to gain ascendancy in the socio-economic mobility of *principales*.

This had occurred previously with the move of the school from Palma Real to Boca de Uracillo in the late 1940s, the split of the school population between El Jobo and Santa Rosa in the '60s, and that of El Coquillo from Boca de Uracillo in the '70s. The problem with the *principales* at El Dominical was that they failed to use the influence of ecclesiastical and political authorities in accomplishing the split, which is the usual order of action followed by *principales* rather than engaging in physical confrontations between the splitting localities.

The Ecclesiastical Involvement

The Chapel

The chance meeting of Rosa's and Teya's middle son and a Claretian priest while both were travelling together in a canoe bound upriver led to further expansion of the Santa Rosa nucleus. The priest was invited to spend the night at Santa Rosa. The kindred of *principales* at Santa Rosa, particularly the women, took advantage of this opportunity to request the construction of a chapel at Santa Rosa. Among the *Naturales*, women keep altars to the saints in the sleeping section of the house, which is the most sacrosanct place in the house where outsiders are not allowed. At this altar they burn candles and make offerings to the saints. The chapel, then, is an extension of activities that occur within the family, as much as the store and the school are extensions of the economic and educational functions of the family.

The request for a chapel was granted after the people of Santa Rosa agreed to participate in a week-long "mission." Wooden crosses were then installed in every house, thus blessing those who cooperated in building the new chapel. This occurred in 1962, the same year that Santa Rosa got

its school. The same dual process of the concurrent introduction of school and chapel had occurred at Boca de Uracillo in the 1940s.

The Patronal Festival

Originating a chapel incurs the selection of a patronal festival. Santa Rosa de Lima was selected as the patron saint for the new chapel and the settlement of Santa Rosa. Her liturgical feast and Rosa's birthday--now in his 90s--are celebrated every year on August 30. Indirectly, the patronal festival is honoring the head *principal* of the settlement as well as the saint.

The patronal festival includes two different types of events that are respectively known as the *fiesta del padre* (priest's feast) and the *fiesta de calle* (street feast). The first includes events such as a mass, baptisms, marriages, a procession, plus a fair where the residents bring donations of raw and cooked food and utilitarian items like wooden trays and paddles. The priest brings used clothes and shoes from the urban center. All items sell for ten cents. The "street" events include the softball games; song duels; the sale and drinking of beer, rum, and corn *chicha*; the sale and eating of special foods; and dancing. The latest trend observed in the Lower Coast was to schedule the "priest's" and the "street" feasts on separate days, at the urging of the priests, so that the "street" events would not detract attendance from the "priest's" events.

The patronal festival is also a means of capital formation for the community fund. This fund is used not only to finance the feast itself, but also for community projects. Most national and international development donors now require the participation of the recipients with materials, cash, or labor. In the 1970s, Santa Rosa has used its community fund to

pay for the transportation of materials and food for the supervisor sent by the government to direct the labor of the settlers in the construction of a school kitchen and dining room; a community hall where fairs and dances are held; a health subcenter, a bridge, and a plastic piping aqueduct donated by national and international development programs. Other celebrations which contribute to the community fund include national holidays, Mother's Day, and Christmas. In general, however, the main objective is not to make money but for all to share in the merriment and extend hospitality to visitors. For example, the net earnings for the 1979 "street feast" of Santa Rosa's patronal festival were only US\$32.00 as can be seen in the statement of accounts for this feast in Appendix III.

The *Junta Católica* and Health Care

With the building of the new chapel, Rosa's and Teya's middle son became the president of the *Junta Católica* in addition to his duties as a political representative. This committee was in charge of coordinating the events for the patronal festival and all other formal Church events. As president of the *Junta Católica*, Rosa's and Teya's middle son made another request to the missionary priest. Since the priest is a "person of more Christian qualifications," he could better appeal to the "Christian sentiments," that is, the humanitarian vein of medical personnel in the government, in private practice, or the United States Army in the Panamá Canal. The priest thus became an intermediary in getting health care. The priest got the support of the Civic Action run by the join forces of the Panamanian National Guard and the United States Army. This military program conducted "medical caravans" along the Rio Indio, at regular intervals during the 1960s. During Christmas seasons in that decade, wives of

United States military men distributed toys and food along the Rio Indio.

In the 1970s, the Ministry of Health built a health subcenter at Santa Rosa. The third son of Rosa's and Teya's youngest daughter was selected to be trained as a medical assistant to run the health subcenter. In this position, he is paid a monthly salary by the Ministry of Health.

The Delegates of the Word and Catechists

In the 1970s, a new group of young Claretian missionaries introduced the program of Delegates of the Word and Catechists in the Lower Coast. These are lay men and women from the region who are trained by the missionaries to conduct the liturgical services and impart religious instruction. They perform the Celebration of the Word every Sunday. This is a mass but without the consecration of the host. The sermons and liturgical readings are a means for the "liberation of the peasantry" (En la Lucha 1979-1981). The Delegates and Catechists attend 3-day seminars tri-monthly. The seminars are held alternately at any of the three seminar centers that the Claretian have built at Boca de Uracillo, Santa Rosa, and Chagres. Emphasis is made on public speaking and analytic interpretation.

At Santa Rosa, the Delegates of the Word are the former treasurer of the *Junta Católica*, who is the husband of the oldest daughter of Rosa's and Teya's oldest son, and the son of Rosa's and Teya's youngest daughter. The Catechists are the wife of the first Delegate and who is the daughter of Rosa's and Teya's oldest son, her youngest sister, and the wife of the youngest son of Rosa's and Teya's oldest daughter. All these individuals represent the third generation of *principales*. They bridge the gap and reduce the potential conflict between the older and younger siblings of the second generation of whom they are the children. Their involvement as

leaders of ecclesiastical programs assured the continuity of the process of *principales*.

Development of the Countrywoman

In addition to her duties as Regional Coordinator of Catequists, the oldest daughter of Rosa's and Teya's oldest son is one of the four female coordinators who receives a salary from the missionaries to conduct the program of *Promoción de la Mujer Campesina* (Development of the Countrywoman). She makes monthly visits to the seven upriver settlements under her charge, and trains promoters in these settlements on the socio-economic development of rural women. Coordinators and promoters attend a 5-day seminar every four months, alternately at any of the seminar centers. The group of women in Santa Rosa participating in this program are presently running a chicken farm (En la Lucha 1980, 15:17).

The Cooperative

The missionaries also organized in 1976 the *Cooperativa Luz Campesina* (Cooperative Light of the Countryfolk), among coffee growers in Rio Indio. At a meeting in the seminar center at Santa Rosa, the missionaries proposed to the peasants that the cooperative would initially install at Santa Rosa a shelling and buying station for coffee. The cash product would be sold directly to processing plants, bypassing the intermediaries. One of the missionaries acted as the first manager of the cooperative. The cooperative was joined initially mostly by members of the Santa Rosa settlement. The husband of the female coordinator of the Development of the Countrywoman became the treasurer of the cooperative, a position that he still holds. The priest-manager appointed the second son of Rosa's and

Teya's youngest daughter as operator of the station. He later succeeded the priest as manager, after taking a course at the Interamerican Cooperative Institute in Panamá City.

After observing the successful operation of the Santa Rosa station for the first two years, members at Boca de Uracillo also decided to have their own shelling and buying station. Other settlements soon established their own stations. Some settlements like Limón de Río Indio and Las Cruces were sponsored by the cooperative in setting up their own stations. Other settlements like El Dominical were patronized by Chinese wholesale coffee buyers from Penonomé, who noticed that the cooperative was becoming a serious competitor and sought to counteract its influence. The patronage of the wholesale buyers was also sought by families competing for the status of *principales* as occurred in Boca de Uracillo where there are now two shelling and buying stations, one of the cooperative and one of the wholesalers. Each station depends on clients from different neighboring settlement that do not have shelling stations. For example, the cooperative station at Uracillo shells coffee from the settlement of Coquillo while the station of the wholesalers shells coffee from San Cristobal.

The number of new stations of the cooperative led to the appointment of a general accountant and coordinator. Rosa's and Teya's grandson was thus promoted from manager to general accountant of the cooperative, at the suggestion of the missionaries. He is paid a salary in this position. Upon leaving the position of manager vacant, the membership voted to also have that as a salaried position and rotate it among members of the other settlements. In 1979 and 1980, managers have been men who are *principales* in their respective settlements.

An indication of the volume of trade of the cooperative as a whole

and of each of the subsidiary stations can be inferred from the statements of accounts for 1978 and 1979 in Appendix IV. During these years coffee was paid to the producers at prices that ranged from 53 to 56 cents per pound of shelled coffee. The net losses do not indicate failures but rather the continuous reinvestment of capital in new installations at new stations. For example, in 1979 a new building was constructed for the station at Limón de Río Indio and a secondhand shelling machine that was bought in Costa Rica was installed at Las Cruces.

The Production Society

In the early 1960s, an entrepreneur from the United States, whom the people recall as "William," but who was not from the Peace Corps, proposed to the people of several settlements in the Lower Coast that they cultivate plantains (*Musa paradisiaca* L.). He would provide the initial seedlings and tools, which the people would pay later on an installment basis, and he would pay for the initial labor and later buy the plantains from them. William spoke with Rosa's and Teya's middle son, the *Corregidor*, who organized a Production Society of 20 members in Santa Rosa. The society planted 5000 seedlings. A year later they harvested hundreds of plantains for William, but the enterprise failed. Not all the settlements responded as well as Santa Rosa, and there were not enough plantains to fill the cargo hold of the ship that William contracted for exporting the plantains. The people in Santa Rosa say that they ate a lot of plantains for two or three years, but this failure did not break their spirit to work in an organized society. Other agricultural societies were to follow.

The Agricultural and Cattle Raising Society

When Rosa's and Teya's middle son became Mayor in the 1960s and learned more about the government bureaucracy, he decided to organize in Santa Rosa an Agricultural and Cattle Raising Society. The society would apply for a cattle loan from the branch office in Colón of the Institute of Economic Development. This office turned down their request for a loan on the grounds that the society did not have enough collateral. Rosa's and Teya's middle son did not give up. He proposed to the 20 members of the society to go, as a group, directly to the central office of the Institute in the capital of the republic. The majority of the group did not go along with this proposal. It demanded too much of their time and money to travel that far. They also felt that they were "nobody," and therefore would surely be denied the loan again.

Only seven members remained in the society. Six of these were from Rosa's and Teya's kindred: three sons, the oldest grandson, and the husbands of two of the granddaughters. They went directly to Panamá City and explained their case. Later they received a message from the *Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería, MAG* (Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle Production), to meet in Colón with an investigating committee from the ministry. The seven men from Santa Rosa went to Colón and met with three agricultural engineers of the ministry. The committee decided that, to qualify for a cattle loan, the society had to first validate itself by a joint project in the cultivation of corn, using fertilizers and techniques recommended by the engineers. The *Naturales* agreed to this; compromise is their typical way of settling *tratos de negocio* (business transactions).

Though a sudden flooding of the river and stormy winds destroyed part of the corn plants, the society harvested enough ears to make a profit in the market in Colón and have enough left for themselves. The agricultural engineers were so pleased that the members of the society were photographed and an article about their project was published in a national agricultural magazine. With such a good performance, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle Production approved a loan of \$3500 at 7 per cent payable in five years. Each of the seven members bought five heifers each, at \$100 per heifer.

The Asentamiento Campesino

In the late 1960s, a coordinator of Agrarian Reform for the province of Colón approached the people at Santa Rosa with the idea of forming an *asentamiento campesino*, a planned agricultural settlement. He told them that they would have guaranteed funds from the Bank of Agricultural Development, technical and organizational assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture, a donation of ten pregnant cows from General Torrijos, and legal protection for their lands from Agrarian Reform. Rosa's and Teya's middle son, the *Corregidor*, liked the idea and encouraged the people at Santa Rosa to organize themselves in this new society, which they perceived just as another organization like the ones that they had formed themselves in the past. In 1970, 30 of the 33 households in Santa Rosa joined a *pre-asentamiento*, a trial settlement. With the 1972 Constitution, they gained full status as an *asentamiento*.

There were two main reasons that the majority had for joining the *asentamiento*. First, they wanted legal protection for their territory. They felt that their usufruct rights to their territory, especially on its

eastern boundary, were threatened by the advancing encroachment of *Interioranos*. The majority of these migrants are *Santeños*, from the province of Los Santos, in the Pacific peninsula of Azuero. Ironically, the *campesinos Santeños* were against the *asentamientos campesinos* (Heckadon Moreno 1977a). One of the households in Santa Rosa that did not join the *asentamiento* was that of a *Santeña* woman and her extended family. She had obtained special permission from the *principales* of Santa Rosa to settle by the stream El Guarapo on the northeastern boundary of Santa Rosa, and also build a temporary house at the nucleus so that her youngest son and her daughter's children could attend the school at Santa Rosa.

The following incident reflects the perception of the *Interioranos* as a territorial threat to the *Naturales*. The oldest granddaughter of Rosa's and Teya's oldest daughter, that is, their greatgranddaughter, married a *Santeño*. Her grandfather, that is, her grandmother's second husband, expelled her from the territory. He would not allow the newlyweds to build a house in the section where their branch of the kindred resides, nor plant in their work sites. The young couple first settled near the father and brothers of the *Interiorano*. After their house burned down and their first son became severely ill, they moved to Panamá City in search of cash labor contracts. After their second son was born and the *Interiorano* suffered a job injury, the young couple returned to Santa Rosa at the request of Rosa's and Teya's oldest daughter, that is, the young woman's grandmother. Since then, the young *Interiorano* has validated his right to be an affine in Rosa's and Teya's kindred by participating in most community projects and effectively using the masonry skills that he acquired in a vocational training center for the unemployed during their sojourn in the capital city. Although he still works in agriculture with

his father's brothers, the *Interiorano* also helps his wife's grandparents, near to whom they now live.

The second main reason that the people of Santa Rosa had for joining the *asentamiento* was that they were assured guaranteed loans from the Bank of Agricultural Development. They wanted a loan to set up a new and bigger store. Although this was not the proposal from the coordinator of Agrarian Reform, the Director of Agrarian Reform in Colón agreed to give them a US\$1000 loan, without interest, to set up a store if they organized themselves in an *asentamiento* and if the original store was transferred to the organization so as to reduce competition. Rosa's and Teya's oldest son agreed to do this as he was getting tired of the bi-weekly trips to the city to buy stock for the store. As a cooperative endeavor, all or several of the members could alternate themselves in making trips to restock the store.

After ten years of operation, the *Asentamiento Campesino Santa Rosa No. 2* is still a viable organization, but only 16 households belong to it. The following reasons were given by those who dropped out. Members are not paid enough for the work in the *asentamiento*. The "gift of ten cows from General Torrijos" turned out to be a loan and not a gift. The bank is continuously encouraging them to take additional loans and they would have to spend all their lifetime paying loans. Since the bank also extends individual loans, ownership of cattle per household is better than collective ownership of all the members of a settlement since then individual households can retain the profit on a sale. The Agrarian Reform has not defended the territory legally against the encroachment of *Interioranos* as the *Interioranos* are also encouraged to take individual loans and all land is said to belong ultimately to the state.

Although women of Santa Rosa belong to the Feminine Club associated with the *asentamiento*, they resent that they are always "in debt" to the female extension worker who brings expensive imported materials to make items copied from "interior decoration" journals, such as macramé plant hangers, swans, rabbits, and dolls. The extension worker from the Ministry of Agricultural Development has advised the women to sell these items so as to recover the cost and even make a profit. However, at the local fairs all items are sold at reduced prices that do not cover the cost of the materials. Since the city is saturated with the same items that are made in home economics programs for girls in the city schools, no one wants to buy the same items from the countrywomen. The extension worker, however, tells the countrywomen that "to make progress" they have to "make the sacrifice to spend money" in making these items. Most countrywomen, however, consider these items irrelevant and they would rather like to make more utilitarian things like clothes (July 1981 c).

The present members of the *asentamiento* consider that the greatest benefit that they receive from belonging to the organization is that they have unlimited credit in the store, payable after a year. This right to extensive credit is validated by the work that they perform for the store and the cattle, or the cooking that the women do for the seminars of the Ministry of Agricultural Development. The volume of trade at the *asentamiento* store can be inferred from the statement of accounts given in Appendix V, based upon the records of sales and expenses kept by the storekeeper in 1979. This position is held by one of Rosa's and Teya's middle sons who is very methodical even though he has never taken an accounting course. An important function of the store is that it helps to cover the initial expenses incurred in the preparations for a feast day and this is

clearly reflected in reduced earnings and losses during the months in which feast days occurred, as can be seen in Appendix V. Profits from the store, however, are not all spent in feast days. The store has invested in a new concrete building with a bigger storage room; a bigger and more powerful outboard motor; a bigger boat; and in 1979 there were discussions among the members about investing in either a motorized hand saw or in a battery-operated television set for the store.

The Santa Rosa store has become a major redistribution center in the inland zone of the *Naturales* of the Rio Indio, for items from the urban transisthmian center. The store is able to buy wholesale quantities for redistribution to smaller retail stores because the *asentamiento* is a program of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and this allows for tax exemption of the store at the municipal level. Ironically, the store is not promoting the local production of food items but rather the consumption of items from the international agri-business complex as can be seen from Appendix VI, which is an inventory of the items sold at the Santa Rosa store in 1977 and 1980. The only type of production that the store may be encouraging is that of coffee, as the store serves as a collection center for this product, which in turn is sold to the cooperative shelling and buying station at Santa Rosa. The influx of cash during the coffee harvest in the dry season months is clearly reflected in the increased sales from January through June, as can be seen in Appendix V. During the coffee harvest, there is an increase in the consumption of sodas, cookies, and candies in particular.

The second most important advantage for the male members of the *asentamiento* is the training that they receive in the care of cattle. The women, however, receive no training in the care of poultry and swine, which

are the small animals that they raise.

Those who have remained in the *asentamiento* include mostly the grandchildren of Rosa and Teya. The older generations of *principales* refer to the younger ones as "the youth," and consider that they, "the old ones," should give an opportunity to the young ones to make a name of their own following the tradition of the *principales*. The role of "the old ones," is to serve as advisors and guides for "the youth" in continuing in the tradition of the *principales*.

Concluding Remarks

Whether the younger generations will be able to continue the tradition of *principales* remains to be seen in the future. It is doubtful, however, that they may be able to do so since their territory is being constricted by the migrant *Interioranos*, extensive cattle production, and increased consumption of cash items without increased production from agriculture to feed greater numbers of people in the countryside and in the urban centers.

Notes

1 For historical purposes, the real names of the settlements and their locations are given in this dissertation. The real names of certain key individuals are also given for the same historical reason that the lives of common men and women also merit historical acknowledgement.

2 Rosa was an orphan after his parents, one sister, and two uncles died in the "Great Plague" of measles that followed the One Thousand Day War (1900-1903). He was originally from Cacacó, a site east of the Toabré river. As an orphan, he first lived in San Miguel with one of his mother's brothers, but this maternal uncle gave preferential treatment to his own children. Rosa, therefore, moved to Rio Indio hoping that his father's brother, who was one of the *principales* at Rio Indio, would treat him better.

3 Among the *Cholos penonomeños*, Saint Rose of Lima was a favorite saint, having been introduced by the Catholic Church as a native saint of the Americas.

CHAPTER IV

WHO ARE THE *PLAYEROS*?

Mi so la Nengre.
We are the Negroes.
(Ritual-play language of
the *Congos*)

The preceding case history of the *principales* of the *Naturales* revealed the role of the *Playeros* as political gatekeepers at the mouth of the Rio Indio. Before explaining the political and economic rise of the *Playero pueblos* in the Lower Coast in this century in Chapter V, the identity of the *Playeros* as Afro-Americans will be examined first in this Chapter IV. This will be done primarily through their genealogies in the 19th and 20th centuries, and by their participation in the ritual *Juego de los Congos* (Play of the *Congos*).

The Afro-American Colonial Past

The *Playeros* are an Afro-American population among whom persist traditions of an Afro-colonial past. In other words, they are descendants of African slaves brought to the Americas, who became miscegenized and acculturated by encounters with other ethnic groups during European colonialism in the New World. General histories of African slaves in the Isthmus of Panamá (Castillero Calvo 1969; De la Guardia 1977; Fortune 1961) confirm the anthropological model of "encounters" proposed for the Afro-American past in the Caribbean (Mintz and Price 1976; Price 1973). This model of

the process of creolization of Afro-Americans is premised on inter-ethnic relations.

The *Playeros* represent a creolization that resulted largely from inter-ethnic relations of Africans with Spaniards and Indians (Castillero Calvo 1969; Fortune 1961). Their acculturation was based on a dominant Spanish colonial society in the Isthmus, where they could have been slaves, rebels, or free individuals (De la Guardia 1977; Jaén Suarez 1978). The socio-cultural matrix of Spanish colonialism meant, among other things, the acquisition of the Spanish language and the Catholic religion by Africans and Indians. The fact that the *Playeros* are basically Spanish speaking and Catholic identifies them as Hispanic Afro-Americans. This contrasts, for example, with the English-speaking, Protestant Afro-Americans in some of the Antilles where acculturation was based on a dominant English colonial society. Both Hispanic and Anglo Afro-Americans are found nowadays in Panamá and both have descendants in the Lower Coast as will be explained later.

Rather than focusing on the colonial past, the ethnic identity of the contemporary *Playeros* will be defined by tracing their ancestors during the republican era of Panamá in the 1800s and 1900s, and by their participation in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*," which in itself is a restatement of their historical past.

The Ancestors in the 1800s and 1900s

Genealogies of contemporary *Playeros* reveal that, aside from a regional ancestral group of Hispanic Afro-Americans, their ancestors include several other groups of people. First and foremost, ancestors of most *Playeros* include the inland *Naturales* with whom they have had long-standing

relations in marriage and ritual coparenthood. The further west along the coastal strip, the more interrelated the *Playeros* become with the *Naturales*, particularly in unions of *Playero* men with *Natural* women.

The genealogies also reflect historical events in the transisthmian area in the last two centuries. Many *Playeros* descend from laborers in the construction of the Panamá Railroad (1850-1855) and the Panamá Canal (1904-1914). The building companies from the United States contracted laborers from China, India, Europe, the United States, the Antilles, and Colombia. Hispanic Afro-American laborers came from the Hispanic Antilles and northern Colombia,¹ while Anglo and Franco Afro-Americans came from the British and French Antilles. Upon completion of the railroad and the canal, some laborers moved to the Lower Coast to gather, buy, and export natural products from the forest and the sea, or to grow foodstuffs for the urban transisthmian area. In the Lower Coast, Chinese and Europeans in particular acted as intermediaries in the international trade, while Afro-Americans and *Naturales* acted as gatherers, producers, and clients. Afro-Americans also served as sailors transporting the trading products, which gave them an opportunity to become intermediaries themselves.

These laborers were men and they established marital relations with women from both the *Playeros* and the *Naturales*.² Most settled or resided among the *Playeros* along the coastal strip, including those with *Natural* inland women. This was due to the greater geographical accessibility of the coastal strip for marine transportation in the import-export trade. Although their descendants bear Chinese, Italian, French, and English surnames, they grew up as Spanish speakers in the Lower Coast.³ The *pueblo* of Gobeá, west of Rio Indio, particularly attracted English-speaking West Indians or Anglo Afro-American Antilleans, who there specialized as turtle

fishers.⁴ More recently, West Indian employees from the Panamá Canal, who have married women from the Lower Coast, build houses in their wives' *pueblos*. They may live in the *pueblo* and commute to work in the canal, or spend weekends and holidays in the *pueblo*, or reside in the *pueblo* upon retirement from the canal.

Marital relations of Chinese and Europeans reflect mainly the "boom-and-bust" effects of the import-export trade. When the "busts" occurred, most of the Chinese and European men returned to the urban transisthmian area or to their native lands, leaving the *Playero* and *Natural* women and their children in the Lower Coast. Marital relations with other Afro-Americans reflect a more permanent post-marital residence in the Lower Coast. This denotes an ethnic identity as Afro-Americans regardless of acculturation under different European colonial societies.

This Afro-American identity is also reflected in marital relations of *Playeros* with Afro-Hispanics from other areas in the Isthmus where there are concentrations of Afro-Americans. These include the *Costa Arriba* (Upper Coast) on the eastern Caribbean slope, the urban transisthmian route, the southeastern Pacific province of Darién, and the Pacific Archipelago of San Miguel in the Gulf of Panamá. This indicates that there has been considerable mobility and ethnic identification among the Afro-American population on the central and eastern sectors of the Isthmus in the 1800s and 1900s. This movement has been largely influenced by the cash economy of the urban transisthmian area, that generates both "pull" and "push" effects among this population.

The Ritual Identity

Two ritual events, in particular, bring together the *Playeros* of different *pueblos* in the Lower Coast and those in the transisthmian urban

center. These are the ritual "Play of the *Congos*" and mortuary rites. Both events serve as rites of intensification and identification. The rites are restatements of the identity of the *Playeros*, their values, their networks, and their organizational system. The ritual "Play of the *Congos*" is an annual pageantry that occurs during a specific season of the year. It not only recapitulates the past but also incorporates present events, telescoping the community system. A description of salient features of the ritual will be given in this chapter, and its significance will be shown in the following chapter on how it influences contemporary events.

Mortuary Rites

Although mortuary rites have no specific dates like the "Play of the *Congos*," whenever they occur they reassert the solidarity of the *Playero* community through the loss of one of its members. Full identity as a member of the *Playero* community is acquired at death with burial at the cemetery of the *pueblo* where that person had been born or had lived. Even if the death occurred in the transisthmian urban center, the deceased is buried at her or his *pueblo* in the Lower Coast. On the night of the burial and for the following eight nights, *Playeros* from different *pueblos* and from the transisthmian center meet at the residence of a member of the kin group of the deceased to pray, play dominoes, tell riddles and stories, and above all to drink and eat special foods. The splendid abundance of food represents the solidarity of the kin group and the members of the *pueblo* who contribute money, foodstuffs, firewood, or labor. The abundance of food also signifies that the region is a source of foodstuffs since wild meats like iguana and deer are highly regarded as special foods for such an occasion. To be able to feed whatever number of people assemble for

the mortuary rites reasserts the extensive networks on which a *Playero* counts through life and which he or she can activate at any time for a variety of reasons. The human resource is the best one the *Playeros* have at their disposal.

The Ritual "Play of the Congos"

The identity of the *Playeros* as Afro-Americans is best exemplified by their annual participation in the ritual "Play of the Congos" and their knowledge of the ritual-play language (Joly 1981 a, b). The dramatical events and the language of the ritual play telescope both an Afro-American past and the socio-cultural nature of the contemporary *Playero* community. By their annual participation in this tradition, the *Playeros* reflect not only their ethnic identity as Afro-Americans but also their distinctive type of community. This tradition distinguishes the Afro-Hispanic population at the mouths of the rivers in the Lower Coast from the inland Hispanic-Indigenous people with whom they otherwise share the resources of the region and the effects of acculturation during Spanish colonialism. In other words, both groups share linguistic similarities and have social relations that arose during Spanish colonialism, but they differ from each other due to their respective African and Indian cultural traditions. While the ritual nativistic movements of Second God and The Priestess identified the *Naturales* with a traditional Indian homeland through oral narrative, the ritual enactment of the "Play of the Congos" and the use of its ritual language is a tradition embedded in the cultural matrix of African slavery in the Americas.

In 1979 and 1980, the Play of the Congos was held in the *Playero pueblos* of Piña, Chagres, Palmas Bellas, Boca de Rio Indio, Gobeá, Miguel

de la Borda, Aguacate, and Coclé del Norte. The ritual season of the *Con-gos* extends from the Eve of Saint Sebastian⁵ on January 19, through Shrove or Fat Tuesday of Carnival. During this period, a group of men and women assume symbolic names of roles in the ritual play, under the leadership of a king and a queen. The names symbolize both a social organization of government officials as well as the ecological resources of the region. (See Appendix VII for a collective list of the names used at Rio Indio, Gobeá, and Miguel de la Borda during the 1979 and 1980 ritual seasons.) This blending of prestigious positions with subsistence food production is significant in the ordinary life of the *Playero* community as will be explained in the following chapter.

The authorities issue an official permit to the lead male player, the king, to enact the play. A prominent site is selected to erect a thatched-roof open house where the ritual players, and the community at large, eat, drink, sing⁶ and dance⁷ to the beat of drums on weekends and during the four days of Carnival, that is, the Shrovetide. In the Lower Coast, this house is called the *purenque* (*palenque* = stockade),⁸ which refers to the enclosed housing compounds built by runaway slaves.

The Dramatical Events

The ritual play is not confined to this house, however. A sequence of events is enacted throughout the season at various sites within the boundaries of the *pueblo*, which becomes an open stage, so to speak.⁹ In fact, all entrances to the *pueblo* are patrolled or barricaded and a fee is charged from non-residents to enter the *pueblo*. The dramatic events are "metonyms of historical narrative" (Smith, Robert 1975:98-100). That is, they are condensed forms of a sequential historical narrative of

experiences encountered by African slaves and their descendants in the Isthmus during the Spanish colonial period. Some of the events have been historically documented. For example, the event known as "The Fight Over the Money Box," which is one of the acts performed on Shrove or Fat Tuesday of Carnival, refers to the capture of some runaway slaves by a Spanish artillery captain, Don Cristóbal Troyano de León, as has been documented by the Panamanian historian Roberto De la Guardia (1977:104-107). Other dramatic events reflect inter-ethnic relations between Afro-Americans and Indians, as well as experiences of Afro-Americans in urban centers in Panamá and subsequent to the colonial period. For example, at Boca de Rio Indio, the "Play of the *Congos*" becomes a "Play of *Congos* and Indians" during the climactic Shrovetide or Carnival. The Indians are largely represented by children and adolescents who are descendants of mixed *Playero* and *Natural* unions. "The Fight Over the Money Box" and the "Peace Treaty with the Indians" will be described and analyzed in more detail in the section of this chapter that explains how history has been transformed into drama.

The dramatical events are performed as an oral tradition, without following any written script. There are various ways of learning this oral tradition. Older people who performed the roles in the past give oral instructions and demonstrate to younger players who replace them how to perform the basic roles and events. Minor roles are training roles for major roles. Although not officially recognized as players, children form play groups of their own and imitate the adult players.¹⁰ Children, moreover, are allowed to participate in the activities within the ritual house. This learning process conforms to the basic transmission of culture in a community context, that has been postulated as a crucial factor in hu-

man evolution (Kimball 1980 b).

Interrelationship of the Ritual and Regular Communities

The events that occurred on January 19, 1979, Eve of Saint Sebastian, at Boca de Rio Indio, will now be described to convey a sense of the inter-relationship between the ritual and the regular communities.¹¹

The Permit

During the morning of January 19, 1979, Luis Antonio Martinez, who was to play the leading male role of *Juan de Dioso-Barachate* (*Juan de Dios-Borrachote* = John of God~Drunkard), the king of the *Congos*, applied for a legal written permit from the official municipal authorities to enact the "Play of the *Congos*." (See Appendix VIII for a copy of this permit.)

During the previous two years, Luis Antonio had been playing the role of *Juan de Diosito-Barachatite* (*Juan de Dios Chiquito-Borrachito* = Little John of God~Little Drunkard), which is a training role for the leading male role. His promotion to the leading role in 1979 coincided with his new role as a married man in the regular community. In December 1978, at 20 years of age, he formalized his relations with *Nidia Noris Navas*, age 15, by bringing her to his house to live and thus acknowledging her as his "public woman." This contrasts with the informal "street" unions that denote an irregular relationship.

No religious or civil ceremony was held for this public union. It was publicly acknowledged, however, that this new status as a married man conferred upon Luis Antonio the right to play the leading male role in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*." The leading male role in the ritual is

considered to be one demanding formality and responsibility, since the man who plays the role assumes the legal responsibility with the official authorities and the responsibility of protecting the *machas* (*machos* = males; *i.e.*, the women) who sing and dance in the ritual house. The ritual play, therefore, may be interpreted as a rite of passage for this young man from the status of a single man to that of a married man.

Playing a ritual role of high status also coincided with Luis Antonio's high status in the regular community. He is one of the sons of Camilo Martinez, who from 1956 to 1968 was Mayor of the district of Donoso and is regarded as one of the leading political and entrepreneurial figures in the Lower Coast. In the past, Camilo, the father, had played the leading role of Dutch Captain, a role that coincided with his "civil" role as a municipal authority. In their ship-like structure, the Dutch held "civilized" dances to the music of violins. The *Congos* would attack the Dutch ship and capture its occupants, who are symbols of the Dutch slave traders. The group of the Dutch is no longer extant at Rio Indio. However, any ordinary man who is not playing a role as a *Nengre* (*Negro* = Negro; *i.e.*, the name by which the *Congos* call themselves) is called a *Marané* (*Holandés* = Dutch). Throughout the ritual season, the *Marané* tease the *Nengre*, who tie the *Marané* to the *potro* (colt; *i.e.*, punishment pole) whenever the *Marané* offend the *Nengre*.

The Pledge of the *Nengre* to the King and Queen

In the evening of January 19, 1979, a meeting was held in the house of Elvira Molinar, who was to play the leading female role of *Macé~Micé~Mecé* (*María Merced* = Mary of Mercy), the queen of the *Congos*. Elvira was also 20 years old at that time, and was also playing the leading female

role for the first time. She was not married then, but held positions of responsibility within the regular community as president of the *Junta Católica* (Catholic Committee) and catechist of the Catholic Church. Thus, she too had demonstrated her responsible commitment in public life. Her role within the organization of the Catholic Church conferred upon her the right to play the leading female role of Mary of Mercy. In the Catholic liturgy, Mary of Mercy is the patron of prisoners and those who are suffering hardships. Mary of Mercy is also the patron saint of Boca de Rio Indio, and the patronal festival of this *Playero pueblo* is celebrated on the liturgical feast day of October 24.

The meeting was attended by most of the young men who were going to play ritual roles. Only three young women, collectively called *machas* (*machos* = males) attended the meeting. At Boca de Rio Indio nowadays only the leading female player and the leading female singer have symbolic names. The lead singer is known as the *Ravellín* (*Revellín* = Ravelin). A roll call was made among the male players about who would play what role in relation to their symbolic names.

One of the players reported that his father was fixing the drums, but needed a new hide which they had been unable to locate. Another player volunteered the hide of a deer that he had hunted.

An agreement was reached by a process of consensus not to begin the play that night, which was the traditional, because many had to work the following Saturday morning, for half a day, in the Ministry of Education-United States Agency for International Development project for rebuilding the school. They were expecting, moreover, many *Playeros* residing in the city of Colón to come to Rio Indio for the weekend to participate in the play.

Luis Antonio and Elvira reminded the players of their duties and responsibilities. Above all, they were bound to obey the orders of the king and the queen at all times, that there would be no severe beatings of those whom they captured, that the women should be protected and respected at all times, and that they were bound to play the game throughout the season until the play ended on Tuesday of Carnival. The meeting ended with the pledge of the *Nengre* to obey their king and queen.

The Transformation of History into Drama

The following description and analysis of the enactment of the events known as "The Fight Over the Money Box," "The Burning of Pacora," and "The Peace Treaty with the Indians," will give a sense of how history has been transformed into drama in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*." These events were enacted at Boca de Rio Indio on February 27, 1979, in the afternoon of Shrove or Fat Tuesday of Carnival, at the climatic end of the ritual season.¹² These events were enacted in the plaza or open space in front or near to the Catholic church and in the ritual house. They began at about 4:00 p.m. and ended at sundown.

The Fight Over the Money Box

Mary of Mercy sat on the south side of the plaza, at the edge of the *camino real* (royal trail), which is the main trail running east-west through the settlement and paralleling the beach. She was accompanied by the *machas* in witnessing "The Fight Over the Money Box." John of God and the *Nengre* surrounded the *Mancella* (*Doncella* = Maiden), who stood over the money box. The role of the Maiden was played by a friendly *Maranê*;

that is, an ordinary man who throughout the ritual season was often allowed to borrow the *Congo mamere* (*sobrero* = hat) and wooden *mamprada* (*espada* = sword) to dance with the *machas* in the *purenque*. He was now dressed as a woman, wearing a peasant straw hat on his head and a wooden sword in one hand.

The Maiden was approached by the *Troyano*, who was wearing a head scarf and a sword. This role was also played by a friendly *Marané*, who on Sunday of Carnival also played the role of *Frastero* (*Forrastero* = Stranger). As a Stranger, he had been dressed in an overcoat and was allowed to dance with the *machas* without any *Nengre* lending him his hat.

The *Troyano* at first sweet-talked with the Maiden in a low, inaudible tone. The Maiden suddenly lifted up her sword and engaged in a sword fight with the *Troyano*. During the fight, the Maiden stepped down from the money box and kicked it to the *Nengre*. *Burucuntoo* (*Barre-con-todo* = Sweeps-All) took the box, managed to escape a *Marané* who tried to hold him, and ran with the box to hide in a shed near a house. Once in the shed, he opened the box and found that it was a hoax, containing only one penny among pieces of broken glass. The box was left with a household-er to keep it until the following *sumana* (*semana* = week; *i.e.*, year).

In the m  lee, *Pujurete* (*Pajarito* = Birdie) ran toward the beach and was chased by the *Troyano*. Birdie no longer wore his feathered conical hat but a head band. He discarded his wooden sword and the flag staff of the *Nengre* black and white flag that he had carried at all times throughout the ritual season. Instead, he now held in one hand the cord of a white kite that flew behind his back as he ran. *Troyano* chased Birdie around the beach and the settlement seven times, trying to get hold of the tail of the kite. In the last round, when they passed by the church plaza, Birdie

placed the kite on the queen's lap.

The Burning of Pacora

As the kite fell on the queen's lap, the *Unjuniero* (*Ingeniero* = Engineer) fired a gun. At this time the Indians of the East Bank came out from behind the church and took the queen as their prisoner. *Troyano* was thus fooled by the Indians, and he was only able to take the kite in his hands instead of the queen, who was said to be at Pacora.

The Peace Treaty with the Indians

The Indians walked with the queen of the *Congos* along the main trail from the church plaza to the stockade of the *Congos*. Outside the stockade, the Indian Chief of the East Bank orally demanded a ransom for Mary of Mercy, the exchange of prisoners, and the right of the Indians to dance inside the stockade. The Indian Chief of the West Bank read aloud a written complaint about the invasion by the *Nengre* of the land of the Indians, and the refusal of the Indian women who had married the *Nengre* to continue wearing their Indian dress.

John of God agreed to pay 50 cents to the Indian Chief of the East Bank as ransom for Mary of Mercy, and 50 cents to the Indian Chief of the West Bank for the use of the land of the Indians. The *Congos* and the Indians exchanged their respective prisoners, and the Indians entered the stockade to dance. The ritual house, however, was first purified with smoke by an Indian woman of the West Bank who swung her burner while dancing. The *Congos* allowed the Indians to play the *Congo* drums, and both *Congos* and Indians danced together inside the house.

Interpretation

The *Troyano* is the historical figure, of Captain Cristobal Troyano de Leon (De la Guardia 1977:104). In 1768, Captain Troyano captured the rebel leader *Pajarito* (Birdie) during the celebration of a black mass in a camp of runaway slaves. Birdie was tied to a cross and could not escape. Captain Troyano was guided to the rebels by his female creole servant. She knew the location of the camp as she had been kidnapped by the rebels and had lived among them long enough to gain their confidence. After living among the rebels, she returned to her Spanish master who then volunteered to go after the rebels since others had failed in this endeavor. Captain Troyano burned the rebel settlement of Pacora and took Birdie as a prisoner to Panamá City. Once in the city, the Spanish authorities proposed to Birdie that he would be granted his freedom if he served as a public executioner for the other rebels who were taken as prisoners during the raid. Birdie executed his fellow rebels and was freed.

It is plausible that the Captain and his female creole servant planned the encounter with the rebels to include some sort of a lure as a money box to be handed by the woman to the rebels as a gift during the celebration of the black mass. This may be the meaning of the sweet talk between the *Troyano* and the *Mancella*, the enactment of the event in front of the church, and her kicking the box to the *Nengre*. It is also plausible that the Captain may have checked out the rebel camp first disguised as a stranger, which is represented by the *Frastero* appearing on Sunday of Carnival and then becoming the *Troyano* on Tuesday. The creole nature of the Maiden is represented by the peasant straw hat. Her having lived with the rebels is represented by her wooden sword.

It can also be speculated that the hierarchical leaders of the rebels may have not been present at the rebel camp during the black mass when Captain Troyano raided the camp. This is represented by the queen sitting at the edge of the main trail, watching the fight over the money box at a distance, and waiting until Birdie and the *Troyano* made their seven rounds. The Captain and the female servant may have forced Birdie to take them to Pacora where the higher rebel leaders may have resided. It is possible that the highest authority may have been a woman. The fact that Birdie decided to cooperate with the Spaniards is represented by the chase of the *Troyano* following *Pujurete*. The apparent treason of Birdie is represented by the substitution of the ritual hat for a head band, and the sword and flag staff for a kite.

It is, nevertheless, also plausible that Birdie may have not betrayed entirely his fellow rebels and may have dilly-dallied along the way, giving the rebels time to hide and escape from Pacora. This is represented by the seven rounds that Birdie makes before taking the *Troyano* to the queen. The kite may also stand for either a written or an oral message that Birdie may have sent to Pacora in advance of his arrival with the enemy. The message may have been addressed to supporters of the rebels, and these supporters may have well been Indians and ordinary freed Afro-Americans. The supporters may have taken the women and children out of Pacora into hiding. The hiding is represented by the hiding of the money box, and the supporters by the Indians who took Mary of Mercy instead of the *Troyano* capturing her.

Both the historical Birdie and the female creole servant face the Prisoner's Dilemma (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981; Rapoport and Chammah 1965), to either cooperate or to defect. As represented in the ritual play,

it appears that they cooperated partly with the rebels and partly with the Spaniards. Such dual behavior is one of the means of resolving the Prisoner's Dilemma (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981). In the case of the historical Birdie, it may well be that he agreed to execute his fellow prisoners to regain his freedom which was more valuable since he was a leader and could thus return to continue leading his people. Genetic kinship theory makes altruism by the sacrifice of a few as a plausible escape to the Prisoner's Dilemma, as those sacrificed continue living in the genes of related individuals (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981).

Moreover, the duality of behavior in resolving the Prisoner's Dilemma allows for the use of two quite different kinds of interaction: one when in the captor's territory, and one when in one's own territory (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981). There had also been a historical precedent for this dual behavior among previous rebel leaders in the Isthmus. When captured sometime during the period 1533 to 1555, the rebel leader Bayano was taken by Captain Francisco Carreño from the Pacific southeastern side of the Isthmus where the capture occurred to the Atlantic northeastern side, to meet with Governor Alvaro de Sosa at the Spanish town of Nombre de Dios. Bayano made an agreement with the Governor to return the runaway slaves, but once freed reneged this agreement (De la Guardia 1977:85).

The transfer of action in the ritual play from the church plaza to the stockade also suggests that the rebel leaders may have used one kind of interaction with the Spaniards in the territory of the Spaniards, and another with neighbors such as Indians and freed Afro-Americans in the rebel territories. It is thus plausible that Birdie may have agreed to execute his fellow prisoners in Panamá City in 1768 because he was in territory of the Spaniards. Once freed, he may well have returned to his own

territory of Pacora to repay his neighbors, either Indians or freed Afro-Americans, for hiding the women and children when Pacora was raided.

The high value of women within the rebel communities is represented in the ritual play by the ransom paid by John of God to the Indian Chief of the East Bank for Mary of Mercy, as well as the reference made by the Indian Chief of the West Bank about those Indian women who had married Negroes and had discontinued wearing their Indian attire. For the Afro-American rebels or runaway slaves, life as social human beings was only viable if they had women and children. Initially, the Indian population was the best possibility available to the rebels to live in a community context outside Spanish control. For example, the runaway slave Felipe in 1549 established a stockade of runaway slaves and Indians (De la Guardia 1977:77-85). In 1555, the rebel leader Bayano took women from the Indian settlement known as Caricua and established working relations with these Indians (De la Guardia 1977:87). Later, women travelling along the Spanish trails were kidnapped and taken by the rebels to live with them in their communities. This was the case of the kidnapped creole servant of Captain Troyano who was taken by Birdie and his rebels in 1768 (De la Guardia 1977:104).

But women and children were also valuable to the Spaniards for the same reason, of making life viable in a community context in the New World. This is suggested by the fact that the two Afro-American women found with the runaway slave Pedro Casanga de Go. Suarez in 1602-03 are described by the Spanish authorities as free and not as runaway slaves (De la Guardia 1977:99-103). In 1768, the female creole of Captain Troyano is described as a servant, not a slave (De la Guardia 1977:104).

It can be inferred, therefore, that women had a high value for both the Afro-American rebels and the Spaniards. This does not imply that women were means of exchange between the human groups. Rather, it reflects the fact that women were important and significant elements for a human community to exist in the New World since women represented the continuity of life as children. A key factor in the evolution of the human species has been life in a community context (Kimball 1980 b). In effect, in the colonial situation women made viable the payoff matrix of creolization whereby all three ethnic groups--Africans, Indians, and Spaniards--continued to exist in a population of genetically related interactants in miscegenized communities.

The coexistence of the Afro-Americans with the Indians in a miscegenized community is represented by the dancing of the Indians and the *Congos* together inside the ritual house at sundown, thus ending the ritual play at Boca de Rio Indio in February 1979. Moreover, it represented the long-standing relations in marriage and ritual coparenthood of the *Playeros* and the *Naturales* in the Lower Coast.

The Ritual-Play Language

In the preceding section, words of the ritual-play language have been purposely used without explaining their sociolinguistic implications. This has been done in order to convey a sense of the language without explaining its rules. This is the way that *Playeros* are socialized in the use of this ritual play language, without anyone telling them how to do it. They learn it by hearing, imitating, memorizing, and playing with it during the ritual season which is the only time when it is used.

The language of the *Congo* ritual players generally conforms to the canonic syllabic structure and vowel harmony of the Spanish language, but undergoes several morphophonemic, syntactic, and semantic alterations (July 1981 a). This section will only explain those semantic and syntactic processes that show evidences of a West African and Caribbean cultural matrix of creolization of languages arising out of cultural contact during the European slave trade (Alleyne 1977).

First, there are a few words in the *Congo* play-ritual language that have no etymological base in the Spanish language. Two of these words deserve particular attention because they have utmost socio-ecological significance: *nimi-nimi* (food) and *jibre* (river). It is posited that *nimi-nimi* is a reduplicated variant of *njam* (eat), which is found in Jamaican Creole, Gullah, Sranan, and others, and probably derives from *njami*, which means "to eat" in Fulani, a language spoken today in Guinea, Gambia, Senegal, and Mali (Trudgill 1979:179). Coincidentally, *Gané ~ Guné* (Guinea) is the mythological place from where the *Nengre* (*Negros* = Negroes), as the players call themselves, say that they come and return to every year.¹³

The ritual-play word for river, *jibre*, may correspond to the Cubanism *jigüe*, which refers to naked, black, hairy dwarfs that come out of the river (Ortiz 1974:305). The *Playeros* narrate myths of little black dwarfs called *familiars* (familiaris), who serve as slaves, performing extraordinary labor tasks, in amazing short periods of time, for people who have associations with the devil. Referring to Henry H. Johnston's *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages* (1919 in Ortiz 1974:305), Fernando Ortiz traces the etymology of the Cubanism *jigüe* to the Cameroons and the Calabars of West Africa, where *jíwe* refers to "monkey." According

to Ortiz (1974:305), the terms for "monkey," "devil," and "dwarf" have frequently been inter-changed in Africa.

The *Congo* ritual-play language preposes the particle *mí* before the verb. In some instances it connotes progressive or continuous aspect, at other times it is just a verb marker. This syntactic structure corresponds to a similar process in other Caribbean Creole and West African languages whereby the particle *de* precedes the verb form (Trudgill 1979: 177). Words and sentences are reduplicated frequently in the *Congo* ritual-play language. Reduplication is prevalent in Caribbean Creole and West African languages. The *Congo* ritual-play language also reduces and simplifies grammar as occurs in the pidginization and creolization of languages (Hymes 1977). Finally, certain morphophonemic processes in the *Congo* ritual-play language suggest correspondences with *Palenquero*, the Spanish-based Creole language of the Afro-American community of El Palenque de San Basilio in northern Colombia (Bickerton and Escalante 1970).

In short, this sociolinguistic phenomenon connotes an ethnic identity as Afro-Americans not only for the players but for the *Playero* community at large who learn to speak and understand the ritual-play language from a very young age. This is particularly evident when the players go around the *pueblo* requesting donations of food to be cooked at the ritual house.

Concluding Remarks

Now that the identity of the *Playeros* as Afro-Americans has been defined, the nature of their system of community development will be better understood in the following chapter which will show how the ritual events of the "Play of the *Congos*" influence that development process.

Notes

1 Bickerton and Escalante (1970), for example, report that many Afro-Americans from the Palenque de San Basilio in northern Colombia left for Panamá to work in the canal.

2 Most women who were left in the Lower Coast by the transient foreigners remarried with local men of their own group who helped them to raise the children of the foreigners as if they were their own children. Most contemporary *Playero* women who are marrying migrant *Interiorano* men have already been married before and have had a child or two with local *Playeros*. These earlier unions occurred at a very young age when both partners were in their teenage years. Many of these local young men later left for the city to work and the young women were left behind with the children. The migrant *Interioranos*, as the transient foreigners earlier in the century, represent an economic resource either in terms of cash or labor for the women in assisting them to feed themselves and their children.

3 This contrasts with the retention of the English language among the majority of West Indians or Anglo Afro-Americans who remained within the transisthmian zone, and also those who settled in great numbers in the province of Bocas del Toro on the western Caribbean side of Panamá and there worked for the United Fruit banana plantations.

4 Reid and Heckadon Moreno (1980:124) report that West Indian turtle fishers from the western Caribbean province of Bocas del Toro would sail to Gobeá not only to fish turtles but also to mate with women.

5 In Brazil, where scholars have correlated the festivities honoring African deities with the feast days of saints in the Catholic liturgical calendar, Saint Sebastian whose feast day the Catholic liturgy celebrates on January 20 corresponds to the African Abalu-aie in whose honor there is festive playing of the drums of Xango, the most prestigious divinity who controls the rivers, rains, tempests, and hardships (Araújo 1973:36).

6 For texts of the songs see Zárate, M. F. (1962); Zárate, D. P. (1971); and Smith, Ronald (1973). The songs are sung by the women in the base language, not the play language.

7 For descriptions of the dance see Cheville and Cheville (1977) and Cheville and Hassan de Llorente (1978).

8 In the northeastern *Costa Arriba* (Upper Coast), the ritual house is known as the *palacio* (palace) (Drolet, Patricia 1978; 1980).

9 For a comparison with the *congada* and other dramatical dances of Afro-Americans in Brazil, see Bastide (1978:119-125) and Araújo (1967:213-410). Bastide traces the roots of the *congada* to a Bantu festival and memories of African kinships, plus incorporation of Catholic ritual under the influence of Jesuit catechization that encouraged these dramatical performances. In fact, Araújo (1967; 1973) describes these dramatical dances in Brazil as a catechetical theater based on the medieval *Chanson de Roland* and adapted by the Jesuits to catechize the African slaves in Brazil.

This catechizing function might possibly apply to the *Congos* in Panamá, as the climatic events of the ritual play on Shrove Tuesday are enacted in front of the church. The lead male and female players use symbolic names that refer to Catholic saints--John of God and Mary of Mercy--and their crowns bear crosses at the apex. Also, Simeon Pacheco, who coordinated and supervised the "Play of the *Congos*" in several *pueblos* in the Lower Coast in the early 1900s, is described as a "bishop" who had made a promise to a saint to keep alive the tradition. At any rate, this may be a case of ritual syncretism or what Bastide (1978) defines as the "two Catholicisms."

10 At Miguel de la Borda, children are officially recognized as players during *Carnavalito* (little Carnival) on the weekend following the Shrove-tide. During that weekend, the children form a complete ritual community, supported and assisted by the adults. Some roles are directly inherited; for example, the son of the 1980 John of God~Drunkard assumed the role of his father, using his father's crown and wooden sword~bushknife.

11 A complete schedule of the events observed in Boca de Río Indio in 1979 is given in Joly (1979 b).

12 A comparison and contrast of the climatic events of Shrove or Fat Tuesday of Carnival observed in 1979 at Boca de Río Indio and in 1980 at Miguel de la Borda, as well as their symbolic meaning in relation to historical accounts about runaway slaves and their rebel communities, is given in Joly (1981 b).

13 The majority of the players nowadays have no conscious association between the play and a historical past. They do not even know that the mythological *Gané*~*Gané* (Guinea) is a geographical site in West Africa.

CHAPTER V
THE PUEBLOS OF THE PLAYEROS

For *Naturales* and *Playeros*, development processes in this century have largely been in response to influences external to the region and emanating from the urban transisthmian center. The two groups of people, however, have had distinctively different patterns of response in their communities. It is in the nature of their respective community systems that the processes of development are best understood. The community system of the *Naturales*, as was described and analyzed in Chapters II and III, is of a familistic nature. A kin based group of *principales* attains socioeconomic status and introduces improvements at a riverside nucleus but most of their houses are dispersed over the territory under their control. Some of their members, usually the middle children, become intermediaries with the urban center but retain their home base in the countryside. This conforms to the personal identity of the *Naturales* as *gente del campo* (people of the countryside).

Among the *Playeros*, 20 or more households bound by a variety of networks in addition to kinship reside in close proximity in *pueblos* at the mouths of rivers by the seashore. In contrast to the *Naturales*, the *Playeros* emphasize that they are *gente de pueblo* (town's people) with their *campos* (agricultural plots) away from their residential centers and 3-5 km inland. In a section of 21 km from the mouth of the Chagres river on the east to the mouth of the Belén river on the west, there are 11 *Playero*

pueblos at the mouths of rivers that empty into the Caribbean (See Map 1.1). The location of the *pueblos* by the shoreline gives the *Playeros* greater geographical accessibility and visibility than the inland *Naturales*. In most cases, the name of the *pueblo* is the same as that of the river¹ and people born and raised at a *pueblo* identify themselves by that name. Their community, however, extends beyond the boundaries of the *pueblo*. *Playeros* at the different *pueblos* are interconnected by economic, political, and ritual networks that give them control over the coastal strip as the territorial dimension of their community system. They also maintain active contacts with other *Playeros* in the urban transisthmian center. Usually those in the urban center represent the older children whom parents generally send out to be educated and employed in the urban center. Those in the urban center, however, do not sever ties entirely with their *pueblos*. They become part of a temporal, fluctuating community that returns to the *pueblos* periodically, especially for mortuary rites and the ritual "Play of the *Congos*."

The *Playero pueblos* are the seats of various governmental offices at the provincial and national levels. These facilities include the offices of two district mayors; two district judges; two district treasurers; two middle, vocational schools; a hospital and a clinic staffed with resident physicians, nurses, laboratory technicians and pharmacies of the Ministry of Health; a regional office of the National Service for Eradication of Malaria; a regional office of the Ministry of Agricultural Development; a regional workshop of the Ministry of Public Works; three diesel electric plants; and an agro-industrial cooperative plantation affiliated with the Ministry of Agricultural Development. Additionally, the *Playeros* have a union of truck owners and drivers and two gasoline vendors. In contrast

to the small Catholic chapels of the *Naturales*, the *Playeros* have slightly bigger buildings with cupolas and steeples. There is usually a paved plaza or park in front of the Catholic church or the government offices. Some *pueblos* have Protestant assemblages in addition to the Catholic facilities.

The foregoing is not simply a trait inventory. These are visible symbols of "areas of social differentiation" (Young and Fujimoto 1965) or "sites of assemblage" (Arensberg and Kimball 1972) that denote the political and economic status of the *Playeros*, and their greater geographical accessibility, in the Lower Coast (Joly 1978). In order to understand their position, however, one must first understand the historical processes that brought it about. This is best done by the case history of the *pueblo* of Boca de Río Indio. This case will also serve to illustrate the nature of the *Playero* community, particularly the associations among different cash rendering activities with subsistence food production.

The Rise of a *Playero* Pueblo: The Case of

Boca de Río Indio

The Present

The *pueblo* at the mouth of the Indio river is divided into two sections on either side of the mouth and connected by a hanging foot bridge. The east side is known as *Pueblo Viejo* (Old Pueblo), while the new *pueblo* is on the west side and is known as *Boca de Río Indio* (Mouth of the Indio River). Each side is in separate districts of the province of Colón: the east in the Chagres and the west in the Donoso district respectively. For legal, political, and economic purposes the residents of the *pueblo* may

alternate registering in either district, and most households have kin in both districts.

The east side includes such "sites of assemblage" or "areas of social differentiation" as the cemetery, the two major retail stores, a restaurant, a liquor store, a private dance hall, the site for the weekly market on Thursday, the truck station for daily passenger and cargo transportation the gasoline vending site, a warehouse-buying station of the Ministry of Agricultural Development, and the regional office of the National Service for Eradication of Malaria. The west side has a Catholic church with its front plaza of benches; a chapel of The Jehovah Witnesses; a chapel of The Soldiers of the Cross of Christ; a primary public school; a public, boarding, vocational, middle school and its plaza with benches; a public dance hall; two sports fields, one of the school and one public; a liquor store; two minor retail stores; the office of the *Corregidor* and the police; a health clinic; two artesian wells with hand-operated pumps; a plastic piping aqueduct with an electric water pump. There is 24-hour electric service on both sides of the *pueblo*, supplied by the diesel electric plant of the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification and located at the *pueblo* of Palmas Bellas. Electricity enables the stores and some households to have refrigerators and television sets.

On the west side are located 53 households and 14 on the east side, for a total of 67 households in the *pueblo*. Six other neighboring households that participate in daily events at the *pueblo* bring the total to 73 households. Three of the neighboring households are upriver in the inland flood plain, two on the east and one on the west bank of the river. The other three are west of the new *pueblo*, two on the big cliff where the new *pueblo* is located and that is known as the *montañuela* (little moun-

tain). The third one is further west on a smaller cliff known as a *morro* (headland), but its members are in the process of building two concrete block houses at the new *pueblo*. There are 25 concrete block houses at the *pueblo*.

The 73 households include 422 persons (218 males, 204 females), with 43 per cent under 15 years of age. Afro-Americans comprise 65 of the 73 households. The other eight households are migrants, seven from the Pacific Interior and one of *Guaymí* Indians from the western Caribbean province of Bocas del Toro. In addition to the regular population of 422 persons, there is a transient population of 86 people consisting of 11 teachers, 50 boarding students, 15 construction laborers, and 10 malaria eradicators. These additional people reside or commute to the *pueblo* on weekdays and during the school year, but return to the urban transisthmian area, other coastal *pueblos*, and inland settlements on weekends, holidays, and vacations. The reverse is also true, as many relatives and friends of the *Playeros* come to the *pueblo* to get away from the urban transisthmian center on weekends, holidays, and vacations.

During the research, 45 households received pay checks averaging \$100 a month for labor in governmental agencies. These included the Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, Government and Justice, Public Works, Housing, the Institute of National Aqueducts and Sewers, the National Assembly, and a joint project of the Ministry of Education and the United States Agency for International Development. In addition, four households received monthly retirement pay checks from the governments of Panamá (3) and the United States (1). Six other households, including two elderly couples, were directly supported by their children employed in the urban transisthmian area and in other *pueblos*.

In addition, 37 households had members who were self-employed. This included 31 women involved in selling cooked food, refrigerated sodas and popsicles, lottery; sewing; laundry; and house servants on weekdays in urban centers. This work by the women allowed for a wider distribution of cash, and often covered some of the food expenses. Other types of self employment by males included the following: two concrete block makers; a mason; a carpenter; an extractive lumberman; a taxidermist who dissected and stuffed animals for the urban tourist trade; a gasoline vendor; a sea-going, outboard, motorboat owner-operator; four fishermen who regularly marketed fish including two who periodically worked aboard shrimp boats in the Pacific Gulf of Panamá.

Even though there is a high number of wage laborers among the *Playeros*, 53 of the 73 households had agricultural plots to grow foodstuffs for household consumption and marketing. The other 20 had access to plots of kin and friends. Eleven households had cattle for marketing locally or in the urban centers. One household had a great number of pigs and chickens for marketing and raffling in urban centers during holidays. Three households specialized as intermediaries in the marketing of *puercos brujos* (witch hogs). These are hogs that are bought and butchered at the *pueblo*, but are sold in the urban transisthmian area to networks of kin, friends, neighbors, and coworkers. All households had a member, including children, who fished regularly in the river or the sea, and four had regular hunters of wild animals. In short, the gathering and production of foodstuffs has not been entirely abandoned and occurs concomitantly with cash employment. This is due in part to the tradition of growing food for home consumption. On the other hand, it is also influenced by the fact that the sources of cash have never been regular, but the result of recurring "booms-and-busts"

that create temporary conditions as will be explained in the next section that will recount the oral economic history of the Rio Indio in the past three quarters of the 20th century.

The Past

The *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio arose in response to what *Playeros* and *Naturales* refer to as *tiempos de valimiento* (times of value) in the latter 1800s and the 1900s (Joly 1979 a), as follows.

Vegetable Ivory, Turtle Shell, Chiclé, and Rubber

At the beginning of the 1900s, there was no *pueblo* at the mouth of the Rio Indio. Ancestors of the *Playeros* who now live in the *pueblo* lived 3-5 km upriver in an area of a flat flood plain and low hills on the east and west banks of the river. Most of the residents at the *pueblo* nowadays have their agricultural plots and cow pastures in that flood plain. They paddle their canoes or walk through inland trails from the seashore *pueblo* to this flood plain. They do this in the late afternoon or on weekends, as most residents have some sort of cash employment during weekdays.

The Chinese Stores at El Chilar

In this inland flood plain, in an area known as El Chilar on the west bank of the Indio and 4 km from the mouth, Chinese men established five general merchandise stores in the late 1800s and the first quarter of the 1900s. They sold imported drygoods including metal tools and cloth, food such as sugar and salt, and liquor such as rum. They bought from *Playeros* and *Naturales* gathered natural products for international export and foodstuffs for the urban market in Colón. The export products includ-

ed vegetable ivory nuts (*Phytelephas seemanni* Cook), chicle (*Achras zapota* L.) rubber (*Castilla panamensis* Cook), and turtle shell (*Eretmochelys imbricata*); although, the latter had been exported from Panamá since 1773 (Montecer et al. 1976-1977). In other words, the Chinese were intermediaries in the international trade and in the marketing of foodstuffs for the urban area. They relied on *Naturales* and *Playeros* as gatherers, producers, and clients. In addition, they depended on the *Playeros* for marine transportation.

The Chinese storekeepers were supplied with merchandise from Chinese wholesalers in the city of Colón. This city had risen in the mid 1800s as the Atlantic terminal of the Panamá Railroad, for whose construction hundreds of Chinese had been contracted by a railroad company from the United States (Pereira Jiménez 1969:267; Picard-Ami and Meléndez 1979). At the beginning of the 1900s, Chinese merchants were well established in Colón (Pereira Jiménez 1969:267). They supplied not only the retail stores of fellow Chinese, but also of Greek and other merchants (Tejeira 1975). The Chinese storekeepers at El Chilar received from the wholesalers not only merchandise but also fellow Chinese men to work as assistants in the retail outlets.² In other words, the wholesalers in Colón also exported human labor to particular localities, thus employing mobility strategies that are reminiscent of the regional mobility strategies that have been described for late imperial China (Skinner 1976). In addition to Rio Indio, there were Chinese storekeepers at the Lagarto, Salud, and Gobeia rivers in the Lower Coast.

Although the Chinese depended on both *Naturales* and *Playeros* for their business, they relied more heavily on the *Playeros* for the export products, foodstuffs, and marine transportation. This acquainted the Afro-

Americans more readily with the operations of the cash economy. First, the *Playeros* had greater access to the ivory palms (*Phytelephas seemani* Cook) which grow wild in the coastal section that they inhabit, that is, from the seashore to 5-10 km inland.³ A gatherer, including women and children, could easily collect a "hand of five nuts," which was the lowest measure used by the Chinese in buying the nuts. The *Playeros* also controlled the maritime transportation of the nuts to Colón, so much so that they categorized their sailboats according to the number of 200 lb. barrels of nuts that a sailboat could carry. Some boats carried 50 barrels, others 100, plus other products and passengers. Coastal men also provided the ship-to-shore rowing service in loading and unloading cargo when the river mouth was closed by a sandbar in the dry season and the sailboats had to anchor at the *portete* (small port) east of the river mouth. This ship-to-shore activity gave rise to *Pueblo Viejo* (Old Pueblo) that was founded by people who moved from the inland flood plain to the east side of the river mouth and performed this service.

The maritime expertise of the *Playeros* and their residence in the coastal strip also meant that they were the turtle fishers.⁴ Fishers formed partnerships of two or three men per dugout canoe to set and check the turtle nets and decoys on the shoals near the coast. As with the crew of a sailboat, these partnerships were not based on kinship but depended on the expertise of the persons and a business relation of shares in the cargo or the catch. Some men had partnerships with *Playeros* from other areas along the coast, particularly if they fished in distant shoals further southwest. If they also worked aboard a sailboat, turtle fishers took the shells or live turtles directly to the exporters or to the food market in Colón. They could thus bypass the Chinese intermediaries at El Chilar.

The Rio Indio Company

Bypassing the Chinese allowed the sailboat captains to become marketing intermediaries themselves. One of these was Captain Diego Vallejos, a Hispanic Afro-American from Chagres Viejo, who moved to Rio Indio when residents at the mouth of the Chagres river had to move because of the danger of flooding from spills of the Gatun Dam that retained the waters of the Chagres to form the Gatun Lake of the Panamá Canal. At Rio Indio, Captain Vallejos became the buying agent for the Rio Indio Company. This was a corporation organized in May 1918 "with a capital of \$30,000, about \$20,000 of which was contributed by Americans residing on the Isthmus...to do a commercial business and develop a tract of land of 120,000 acres on the Indio River, some 30 miles west of Colon. The land referred to produces considerable quantities of vegetable ivory" (Bulletin of the Pan American Union 1918:883; McCain 1937:99). According to oral history, this tract of land extended from the Salud river, 7 km east of Rio Indio, to the east bank of the Indio, and from the seashore on the north to Los Uveros on the south, 29 km inland. People who lived in this land could continue living there if they agreed to gather the ivory nuts and tap the chicle and rubber trees, and sell these to Captain Vallejos at the store that he opened at La Encantada. This was on the west bank of the Indio, 11 km from the mouth and 7 km further inland than the Chinese at El Chilar. This gave Captain Vallejos the advantage of being closer to the *Naturales* and encourage them to become gatherers also. In addition, Captain Vallejos and other sailboat owners and their crews often paddled upriver to buy foodstuffs from the *Naturales*, particularly chickens and pigs, with which to supplement foodstuffs that the *Playeros* also produced for the urban market.

Captain Vallejos' appointment as a buying agent for the Rio Indio Company reflects the influential contacts that he had in Colón. This influence is also reflected in the appointment of his son Cristobal, who had been educated in Colón, as one of the first school teachers in the Lower Coast in the early 1900s. At this time, the school was located at La Encantada as that was a borderline location for the *Naturales* and *Playeros*. The school at the river mouth was not established until after the church was built at the new *pueblo*.

The Catholic Church and the New Pueblo

Aboard the trading sailboats travelled the first Catholic Claretian missionaries to the Lower Coast in the 1920s (personal communication in 1979 with Monsignor Jesús Serrano, Bishop of Colón, who was one of these early missionaries; Pujadas 1976). In 1928 a Catholic church was built on the west side of the river mouth. Since Pueblo Viejo annually flooded because of its location on the low, sandy shore of the east side of the river mouth, the church was built on top of a sea cliff on the west side of the river mouth. This triggered the move of some people from the inland flood plain to the west side of the river mouth, thus giving rise to the new *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio. Those who lived at Pueblo Viejo remained residing there. Having people on both sides of the river mouth gave the *Playeros* from Rio Indio access to two municipal bureaucracies. *Playeros* from Rio Indio have served as mayors for the two districts.

The patron saint selected for the new church and *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio was Mary of Mercy, whose liturgical feast is celebrated on the 24th of September.⁵ In the Catholic liturgy, Mary of Mercy represents the patron of prisoners and people undergoing hardships. Coincidentally,

Mary of Mercy is the symbolic name of the queen or lead female player in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*," who abbreviate it in their language as *Macé* or *Mecé* or *Micé*. Having Mary of Mercy as a patron saint reaffirmed the Afro-American identity of the *Playeros* as participants in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*."

Since the *Playero* churches were the first to be built in the region, the inland *Naturales* began to descend downriver to attend the patronal festivals at the *Playero pueblos*. Many coparenthood and marital relations were then established between *Playeros* and *Naturales*. The patronal festival at the new *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio also triggered the move of the cockfighting and lawn bowling that took place at the Chinese stores at El Chilar to the plaza in front of the church as well as the space behind the church. These events joined *Naturales* and *Playeros* in gambling and drinking together, which is said to have been the way that much of the cash received for the export products was spent.

The "bust" of the "boom"

The Chinese remained at El Chilar until the early 1930s. At about that time their stores were destroyed by a big fire that no one knew how it originated.⁶ The Chinese decided to move to Colón and to China, leaving their *Playero* and *Natural* women and children at Rio Indio. The sea captains, however, continued acting as intermediaries in the marketing system. They served as a link in the shift to the rising value of bananas at Rio Indio as the value of vegetable ivory and rubber declined in the Isthmus due to their commercial production in a bigger scale in South America and Southeast Asia.

The Banana Boom

The Banana boom reaffirmed the position of the *Playeros* at the mouth of the river, their role as marketing intermediaries, and their relations with Afro-Americans from other regions. This boom also reflected how events in other regions in the Isthmus triggered events in the Lower Coast. The boom is divided into two phases, as follows.

The First Phase 1930-1940

From 1915 to 1930, the United Fruit Company plantations in the northwestern Caribbean province of Bocas del Toro were affected by the Panamá Disease (*Fusarium oxysporum*) (Stephens 1976). Since soil exhaustion was causally linked with the disease, one of the solutions was to extend production into other areas thinking that there were abundant lands for expansion (Simmonds 1966:318). The United Fruit Company extended its plantations into the southwestern Pacific province of Chiriquí, forming the Chiriquí Land Company (Stephens 1976). But since the United Fruit Company was engaged in mixed company farming and buying from independent producers as was characteristic during the beginning of the banana trade (Simmonds 1966:318), it depended also on bananas bought by intermediaries from small independent growers. The Colón Import and Export Company⁷ (Vázquez M. 1939) was one of these intermediaries that bought bananas from small growers in the northeastern Caribbean region of the Upper Coast (Drolet 1978). When the Panamá Disease also appeared at the same time in the Upper Coast (Drolet, P. 1978) the Colón Import and Export Company followed the same expansionary solution and contracted an Afro-American sea captain to promote the cultivation of bananas in the Lower Coast. Prior to this time, the

Colón Import and Export Company had not sent its boats and buying agents to the Lower Coast. This was due to the greater navigational hazards in the Lower than in the Upper Coast and that had been reported since Spanish colonial times (Cuervo 1891; Jaén Arosemena 1956). The Chinese storekeepers and the *Playero* sailing captains had, therefore, assumed the transportation risks during the vegetable ivory-chicle-rubber-turtle shell boom.

In 1932, Captain Alfredo Davis, an Afro-American from the Colombian Caribbean island of San Andrés and who had moved to Colón in 1925, went to the Lower Coast for the first time to buy bananas for the Colón Import and Export Company. When he arrived in Rio Indio in July 1932, Captain Davis was only able to buy 87 stems of bananas. He spoke with the people at Rio Indio and encouraged them to plant the *patriota*, that is, the *Gross Michele* variety then preferred by the United Fruit Company. By 1933, Captain Davis was getting 4000 stems of bananas bi-weekly from Rio Indio alone, plus those he also bought at other river mouths along the Lower Coast, as far west as Coclé del Norte. Captain Davis also sold metal goods like bushknives, grinding machines, pots and pans from the Colón Import and Export Company to storekeepers at the river mouths. By this time, the vacuum left by the Chinese storekeepers was filled by *Playeros* at Boca de Rio Indio. The life history of one of these storekeepers, with whom Captain Davis established trading and ritual coparenthood relations, deserves particular attention. It illustrates the networks that exist in the Lower Coast, and between this region and the transisthmian area. It also exemplifies the entrepreneurial, political, and professional roles of the *Playeros*.

The Case of a *Playero* Entrepreneur

Evaristo Betegón was born in 1913, the son of Afro-American residents at El Charcón, 3 km inland on the east bank of the Indio river. His father was Captain Andrés Betegón, who owned and operated his own sailboat. His mother, Serafina Camargo, for many years played the lead role of Mary of Mercy in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*" at Rio Indio. She was well known and loved by both *Playeros* and *Naturales*, as many leading *Playero* women are in the Lower Coast. In 1932, at age 19, Evaristo married 15-year-old Sabina Mejía Bosques, daughter of *Playero* residents at Gobeá, the next river west of Rio Indio. Sabina left Gobeá to reside with Evaristo at the new *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio, which then had few houses. They settled at the base of the sea cliff on the west bank of the river mouth, in a section known nowadays as the *bajo* (lowland). The Betegón family has continued occupying the same site since that time. Sites by the river bank are known as the "outside," and connote primacy of first arrivals and socio-economic control in the same way that the term is used by the *Naturales* to apply to the nuclei of their settlements.

At Boca de Rio Indio, Evaristo became a *negociante* (businessman), while his wife Sabina established her own business of baking coconut bread in addition to assisting in managing the store. She also made *granjerías* (vending stands of cooked food) on feast days and on banana trading days. This independent business activity as bakers, storekeepers, food and lottery vendors is characteristic of many *Playero* women in the Lower Coast and compares with similar entrepreneurial roles of Afro-American women in the Caribbean and with West African women. This female entrepreneurial role among the *Playeros* contrasts quite dramatically with

behavior of the inland women of the *Naturales* who engage in such activities to a lesser extent; although, the *Natural* women participate more than the *Playero* women in agriculture and animal raising activities.

In addition to setting up the store, Evaristo planted a coconut palm grove at Salcipuedes, a sector of the tract of land of the Rio Indio Company that by then had ceased operations having been arraigned by the Panamanian government for not paying taxes. Evaristo also started raising a few heads of cattle at El Charcón, where his parents continued living in the inland flood plain. He bought pigs, chickens, coconuts, and oranges from *Naturales* and *Playeros* to ship to the food market in Colón. He had four dugout canoes that he rented to other *Playero* men to row out to the banana boats. The rowers charged US\$0.10 per stem from the banana sellers, most of whom were inland *Naturales* who feared this task after one of them capsized and drowned while doing this.

The Betegón store was supplied not only with drygoods from the Colón Import and Export Company, but also with groceries from Tagaropulos who was also serving as an intermediary for the United Fruit Company (Tejeira 1975). Antonio Tagaropulos was a Greek merchant in Colón who began a multifaceted business enterprise that nowadays includes as its main lines the chandling of ships transiting the Panamá Canal and a chain of supermarkets in the urban transisthmian area (Tejeira 1975). Tagaropulos and what he called his "Mosquito Fleet" served as links between the first and second phases of the banana boom in the Lower Coast. The two phases are divided by World War II when the international banana trade was suspended and resumed after the war. The interim during the war was filled by the second rubber boom, as will be explained later.

The Second Phase 1946-1958

It was during the second phase of the banana boom that Evaristo Betegón entered into a partnership with Rosa Madrid's oldest son in setting up a store at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio. Tagaropulos extended credit to Betegón and Madrid in buying groceries at wholesale prices. Although Tagaropulos stopped buying bananas and coconuts in 1958 when he sold his "Mosquito Fleet" (Tejeira 1975), the storekeepers at Rio Indio continued buying groceries from Tagaropulos' warehouse in Colón. By then trucking had replaced marine transportation in part of the Lower Coast, but the shift in the means of transportation did not alter the role of the *Playeros* as the principal transporters of products to be marketed in the urban transisthmian center. Either as sailors or truck drivers, they were the operators of the transportation system.

The United States Army in the Panamá Canal had built a coastal access road during World War II, extending from Gatún Lake westward to Salud, 7 km east of Rio Indio. At first people from Rio Indio would go on foot, horseback, or boat to and from Salud. Later some truck owners-drivers opened a track along the seacoast from Salud to Rio Indio. Evaristo owned and operated a truck; although, most truck owners-drivers were *Playeros* from the *pueblos* of Salud and Palmas Bellas who organized themselves in a union in 1956. *Playeros* from these *pueblos* have retained control of the trucking business until the present.

Evaristo died in 1957 in a truck accident on the new coastal highway. During the mortuary rites, his house and store burned down. As in the case of the Chinese stores, no one knew how the fire originated. The Betegón discontinued operations after the fire, almost like the burning

of the Chinese stores at El Chilar had discontinued their businesses. The store was no longer essential for Evaristo's heirs, although they did continue cultivating their land through hired laborers. Most of the children of Evaristo and Sabina had been formally educated in high schools in Colón and were working as professionals either in Colón or in the Lower Coast. For example, one of the daughters is a high-school teacher working in the middle school at the *pueblo* of Palmas Bellas, east of Rio Indio. One of the sons worked as a school teacher among the *Naturales* in the upriver settlement of Boca de Uracillo, and in the 1970s became Mayor of the district of Donoso following the example of his father's brother who had been Mayor of the district of Chagres in the 1950s. This indicates the political power of the *Playeros*, who control most of the bureaucratic appointments in the Lower Coast through their networks in the urban centers.

The Second Rubber Boom

A second rubber boom occurred during World War II (1940-1945). This was an "emergency program" of the United States due to the Japanese occupation of English and Dutch rubber plantations in Southeast Asia (Harrington 1945:777-778). People along the Rio Indio distinguish differences between this second rubber boom and the first when rubber was exported along with ivory nuts and turtle shells. The gathered natural products of the first boom were said to be "gifts of God," that is, they were wild; whereas, in the second boom silviculture of rubber began to be practiced. Also, during the first boom, people only used their bushknives to make incisions in the tree as far up as they could reach, without climbing the tree with ropes and spikes and using special knives as occurred in the second boom.

The major difference, however, was the fact that the cultivation and tapping of rubber trees in the 1940s was promoted officially by the governments of the United States and Panamá (Harrington 1945:791-792), that is-- issued specific instructions in pamphlets to the people (Seeley 1942). Rubber was bought by an agency in Panamá of the Rubber Reserve Chicle Company of Washington, D. C. This agency had a buyer in Rio Indio (Harrington 1945:822). The buyer was a *Natural* from Boca de Uracillo. The agency equipped him with a store to supply foodstuffs and special equipment to the tappers. *Playeros*, therefore, would go upriver to tap and sell rubber directly in the inland mountainous zone. This reversed the trend of previous movements of people downriver in the preceding booms when the collection of products for marketing had occurred at the river mouths by the seashore and not in the inland mountainous zone. For the inland task, *Playeros* formed "companies," that is, gangs of tappers that were bound by a business relation in a share of the proceeds from the sale of rubber, much the same working principle operating among the sailboat crews and turtle fishers.

Some *Playero* tappers would bypass the buyer at Uracillo and take the rubber directly to the Panamá Railroad station in Colón, as the Rubber Reserve Chicle Company assumed the cost of transportation by train for all rubber tapped in the Atlantic coast of the Isthmus (Harrington 1945:793). The price paid by this company at their warehouse was US\$0.38 per pound, while the buyers like the one at Uracillo paid US\$0.32 per pound (Harrington 1945:815-816), so there were a few cents to be gained in bypassing the buyer at Uracillo. In general, though, this boom restated the interdependent relations between *Playeros* and *Naturales* in sharing the regional resources and in marital unions between *Playero* tappers and *Natu-*

ral women. *Playeros* at Pueblo Viejo would assist the buyer from Uracillo in storing and transporting rubber when he occasionally used the river route on his way to the Colón railroad station. His usual marketing route, however, was inland to Cuipo or Ciricito on the shores of Gatún Lake. There the rubber was loaded aboard launches that carried the cargo across the lake to the Gatún railroad station by the Gatún Locks of the Panamá Canal. At either Gatún or Colón, the buyer from Uracillo could get groceries and equipment for his store from the commissaries of the Panamá Canal-Panamá Railroad Company. As an agency engaged in the production of a vital war product, the Rubber Reserve Chicle Company was exempted by Panamá of all import duties on supplies destined for use by the rubber tappers, most supplies being imported through the Panamá Canal-Panamá Railroad Company (Harrington 1945:816). No wonder that people called the store at Uracillo *La Zona* (The Zone) in reference to the former Panamá Canal Zone.

Other activities of the United States Army in Panamá during World War II also brought together *Naturales* and *Playeros* who worked as temporary manual laborers in the construction of United States Army bases, camps, roads, and airstrips in the Atlantic coast.⁸ This was the case of the two oldest sons of Rosa Madrid and Eleuteria Rodriguez of Santa Rosa de Río Indio, who became more acquainted with *Playeros* like the Betegón brothers after working together in United States Army projects.

The Palm Oil Plantation

As with the banana boom, the existence of the palm oil plantation at Icacal, east of Río Indio, covers two phases from its beginning in 1959 to the present. It was first a Dutch company and now it is an agro-industrial

cooperative.

The Amsterdam Agricultural Company

As will be recalled, the *Playero* entrepreneur Evaristo Betegón died in a truck accident in 1957, almost at the end of the banana boom. Two years after his death, his wife Sabina sold the usufruct rights of their coconut grove in Salcipuedes to the *Compañía Agrícola Amsterdam, S. A.* (Amsterdam Agricultural Company), hereafter referred to as CAASA. This Dutch Company "was incorporated under the laws of the Republic of Panamá on January 19, 1959, and commenced preliminary development operations for a palm oil plantation in the latter part of the year" (CAASA a:1960).⁹ Associated companies included the *M. V. Rubber Cultiv. Mig "Amsterdam"* of Holland with US\$750,000 in shares, and the *Compañía Panameña de Aceites* (Panamanian Oil Company), a subsidiary of Colgate-Palmolive of Central America, with US\$250,000 in shares by 1969 (CAASA a:1969).

The 5,870 hectares now covering the plantation coincide with a large portion of the 120,000 acres bought by the Rio Indio Company in 1918 during the vegetable ivory boom. This correlation suggests that certain geographical spaces in the Isthmus have repeatedly been controlled by the international political economy of the transisthmian area.¹⁰ The palm oil plantation covers an area between the mouth of the Salud river on the east, to the mouth of the Rio Indio on the west, and from the seashore on the north to 10 km inland as far south as the Escobal stream on the east and the Agua Bendita stream on the west and that empty into the Salud and Indio rivers respectively. This area excludes the *pueblos* of Salud on the east and Pueblo Viejo on the west by the mouths of the Salud and Indio rivers respectively.

Sabina claimed to have received US\$1,600 from the Dutch for the coconut grove, at the rate of US\$5 per palm. She considered this amount as a *tontería* (silliness), that she used mainly to build a concrete block house to replace the buildings that burned during the mortuary rites for her husband. According to the annual reports of the Dutch, the company bought usufruct rights from 40 persons. The list of names included people from the *pueblos* of Boca de Rio Indio and Salud, as well as people in the inland flood plain. Other people, however, claim that they never sold usufruct rights to the company and that they were allowed to hold unto 10 hectares along the east river bank of the Indio and the seashore site of Pueblo Viejo. This is not acknowledged by either the company records nor the present operators of the plantation. In fact, the company monthly reports repeatedly alluded to "the continuous illegal occupation of land along the rivers Salud and Indio" (CAASA b:1964, translation mine).

Most households nowadays at Boca de Rio Indio, Pueblo Viejo, and the eastern bank of the Indio bordering the plantation have worked for the plantation at one time or another as manual laborers or as contractors of laborers. In regard to laborers and labor contractors, the monthly reports repeatedly alluded to the instability of laborers, the inability of contractors to adjust to stipulated time contracts, and labor strikes (CAASA b:1963-1966). An analysis of the months in which such labor incidents were reported revealed that they occurred at critical periods in the swidden agricultural cycle, namely at planting and harvesting. This reflects the tradition of a mixed cash-subsistence economy, as well as the instability of a cash economy whereby "busts" follow "booms" and whereby manual laborers are hired only on a temporary basis.

This subsistence base is still important for the seven *Playero* households of Boca de Rio Indio that have been continuously employed by the plantation since the 1960s to the present. These seven households refused to move away from the *pueblo* to reside in the houses rented by the plantation to its laborers. They argued that the *pueblo* is closer to their agricultural lands on the west side of the Indio. They continue to cultivate these lands on weekends or after the company working hours. In their case, and that of employees that reside at the *pueblo* of Salud, the plantation agreed to provide daily transportation service. This is regularly done in the morning at 6:30 a.m. to begin work at 7:00 a.m., but not always available at quitting time at 3:00 p.m. when they usually hitchhike on a private passenger-cargo truck. All these households also consider that at the *pueblo* they can build their own concrete block houses in whichever style they want, and where they can accommodate or be near to their kin-folk and friends.

The case of these seven households is similar to that of three other households at Boca de Rio Indio, where the husband works in the city of Colón on weekdays, but returns to the *pueblo* on weekends and holidays to be with wife and children and work in their agricultural plots. In all three cases, the men have a long-standing record of employment in government agencies including the National Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers and the National Institute of Housing. In one of these cases, the wife and four children (two sons and two daughters) resided temporarily in the city while the children were attending high school in the city, but returned to the *pueblo* when one of the daughters was appointed as school teacher in the Lower Coast and the other daughter was engaged to be married to a government official in the Lower Coast. The sons remained employed in the trans-

isthmian area, but return to the *pueblo* on weekends and holidays with the father.

Such networks between *Playeros* and institutions in the trans-isthmian area are also evident in the Dutch monthly reports. For example, the lawyers called upon to resolve problems between labor contractors and the company were always Afro-Americans from *Playero pueblos* of the Lower Coast and who now work in the urban transisthmian center. Two of the labor contractors from Boca de Rio Indio had been government officials in the district of Donoso, and knew about legal rights. The right to unionize, for example, had been put into effect since 1956 by the truck owners-drivers of the Lower Coast. The Dutch, however, ignored that precedent and their reports alluded to instigations by union leaders from the urban center. The plantation laborers unionized in August 1964 (CAASA b:1964).

The Dutch also ignored the result of the action against the Rio Indio Company, which had been arraigned by the government for not paying taxes during the ivory boom. In October 1964, the Dutch company was arraigned by the district of Chagres to pay a district land tax. Coincidentally, one of the climatic events in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*" is "The Measuring of the Land" which involves the charging of a tax for buildings *en la tarengo de la Nengre* (*en el terreno de los Negros* = in the land of the Negroes) (July 1981 b).

In fact, the ritual "Play of the *Congos*" as enacted in the Lower Coast includes confrontations between Dutch sailors and the *Congos*, as was explained in the preceding chapter. One of the labor contractors from Boca de Rio Indio had in the past played the role of Dutch Captain.

As was explained in the preceding chapter, dramatical, ritual events are metonyms that condense and emotionally structure the historical

narrative so that the participants, players and spectators, can personally identify with the events in a metaphoric process. Although referring to something that happened in the past, the metonymic process extends into the present and future and becomes a metaphoric process by which one takes the metonym and associates it with something else, most often with oneself and one's own condition (Smith, Robert 1975:100).

With a ritual "Play of the *Congos*" based on a historical past of Dutch slave raids and Dutch slave ships, it is not surprising that the Amsterdam Agricultural Company repeatedly had what they reported as a "labor problem" in the region and that justified bringing in temporary laborers from the Pacific *Interior* who were not Afro-Americans nor *Naturales*. The latter did not like to work for the Dutch either because it interfered with their agricultural activities and became instead independent coffee producers as the price of coffee rose in the international market in the 1960s and 1970s (Joly 1979 a).

The Agro-Industrial Cooperative

The social problems that the Dutch faced were compounded by natural problems of pests that killed the imported African palms.

In the face of natural and social problems, the Dutch wanted to pull out even though they had begun experimenting with a new hybrid that they had brought from their plantations in Turbo, Colombia. The Panamanian agricultural engineer who had worked with the Dutch since 1963 and who had established kinship relations with one of the leading *Playero* families of Salud, appealed to the *Corporación Financiera Nacional* (National Financial Corporation) to negotiate international loans to continue the hybrid experiment at the plantation. As a result of these negotia-

tions, the Dutch sold their US\$3 million facilities in 1974 to an agro-industrial cooperative formed by the 200 employees at the plantation and directly affiliated to the Ministry of Agricultural Development under its program of Agrarian Reform. As a cooperative, laborers were told that they could not strike against themselves as they were now the owners. As an agency of the national government, the cooperative was exempt from paying taxes to the district of Chagres. Supposedly this would take care of the two major social problems that the Dutch had been facing.

The laborers have so far accepted this arrangement. The general attitude is one of "wait and see" if the hybrids will produce successfully. They will continue working as long as they receive a monthly salary, now largely paid from the national Social Security fund. Some employees, however, resent that they have no real managerial authority, no decision-making power at high levels, nor training to eventually be better managers and decision makers. Some also resent that they receive no real economic compensation for performing many voluntary social services that are intrinsic in a cooperative organizational structure, particularly those involving social issues. Others have complained about leaking roofs in the plantation houses, but have been told that repairs cannot be made because the international loans only cover the hybrid experiment and not the social aspects of the plantation. So the social aspect of the plantation continues to be a problem as it was for the Dutch, even though the technical aspects of the experiment are so far proceeding well to the extent that the agricultural engineer-manager has been transferred to supervise a new plantation of the Ministry of Agricultural Development in the southwestern Pacific province of Chiriquí.

The Production School

During the research, 24 of the 73 households of the *pueblo* received monthly salaries in connection with work at a "production school." This was a public, boarding, vocational, middle, coeducational school where male students received primarily an agricultural training and female students concentrated in "family administration" (sewing, handicrafts, and cooking). The school at Boca de Rio Indio became a "production school" in 1975 under the Integrated Educational Development Program that was decreed in February of that year (Isos 1977). The school at Boca de Rio Indio was selected for two major reasons. First, there were high-ranking *Playero* educators in high decision-making levels of the Ministry of Education. Secondly, because education in the production schools was to be "closely connected with poles of development" (Isos 1977:397-398). This meant that students graduating from such schools would "play a part in the projects, plans, and programmes of the national development policy" and help "to restrain the population from leaving the rural areas by providing people with better living conditions" (Isos 1977).

The school at Boca de Rio Indio was connected with two poles of development related to the national policy of Agrarian Reform and agricultural development. The first pole consisted of the five *asentamientos campesinos* (planned agricultural settlements) that were in operation since 1972 on the east bank of the Rio Indio among the inland *Naturales*. This included the settlement of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio. The schools in these settlements were among the 15 "satellite schools" incorporated to the "basic center" of Boca de Rio Indio (Dirección Nacional de Educación Básica General 1976:2). The second pole was the Agro-Industrial Cooperative of Icacal that in 1974 continued operating the palm oil plantation that the

Dutch had begun in 1959.

Fifteen of the 24 households who had a member working at the school were only temporarily employed in a 2-year project to rebuild the school in 1978 and 1979. Rebuilding was necessary to transform the previous basic school into a real "production school" with proper boarding facilities and workshops. The proposal for this project called for US\$351,825 of which 66 per cent was to be covered by the United States Agency for International Development (Dirección Nacional de Educación Básica General 1976). The salary of another temporary employee working as a school janitor also came from international funding through an "Emergency Plan" to alleviate unemployment in the country. Permanent employment was only available to 8 of the 24 households. These included 2 female cooks, 1 female secretary, 1 male and 1 female teacher, and 3 male manual laborers who were actually doing some of the agricultural work required of students including the butchering and marketing of animals. In addition, 5 households were deriving either cash or foodstuffs by providing sleeping space and food to teachers, laborers, and students. Many households, especially those of the temporary laborers, were benefitting from surplus materials. They were also receiving the voluntary assistance in house building and repairs by the expert laborers of the permanent crew of the Ministry of Education. In other words, several houses in Rio Indio got the roofs repaired, walls painted, floors cemented, new tiles, and concrete block additions.

By the end of 1979, however, there was concern in these households about employment at the school. The rebuilding was to be completed in February 1980. By April 1980, the school would reopen after vacations but not as a "production school." A general strike of public and private school teachers in the country, from September to December 1979, was set-

tled after the Ministry of Education agreed, among other things like an increase in salary, to abolish the "Educational Reform." The "production schools" were a key element in this reform that had been in the making since 1970.

One of the basic issues argued by the striking teachers for the abolition of the Educational Reform was that it restricted educational and occupational opportunities for people in rural areas. Both *Naturales* and *Playeros* would voice their agreement with this issue whenever they listened to the teachers over the radio and the television, and would comment about the troubles their children would undergo in getting admitted to higher education programs when they presented credits from the "production school." Also, students who had graduated under the program had been promised employment in national agricultural programs but this had not been fulfilled, and their degrees as agricultural technicians had not been validated by the Ministry of Education that certifies all degrees of public and private schools after graduation. Although both *Naturales* and *Playeros* value their agricultural activities, they nevertheless have hopes for some of their children to "advance" and receive a full formal higher education, including a university education. This argument is best expressed in the statement distributed in all Catholic churches on September 21, 1979, and issued by the Panamanian Episcopal Conference that supported the teachers and even acted as mediators in trying to negotiate an agreement with the Ministry of Education:

The Reform has pretended, moreover, to politicize education in favor of a determined system. This intent is clearly perceived in the base document "General Report on the Educational Reform" (1971), as well as in the "General Synthesis of the Interdisciplinary Workshop for the Instrumentality of the Educational Reform" (1975). It responds to a concept of education as a superstructure at the service of basic political and economic structures. Christian humanism, in contrast, insists that the primacy

of the human person . . . demands working freely and responsibly in society for the system that contributes the most to the well-being and development of man and all men (Conferencia Episcopal Panameña 1979; translation mine).

As in the case of the agro-industrial palm oil plantation, the attitude of those employed at the school was one of "wait and see." Those who were permanently employed expected to be carried over by whatever new educational program was implemented. There were tentative plans from the School of Agronomy of the National University to use some of the new facilities at the school for a joint project with the University of Delaware under a United States Title XII strengthening grant for universities (Universidad de Panamá/Universidad de Delaware 1979). A few of those who had been temporarily employed in the rebuilding project were contemplating working in Colón, but the majority were expecting to be rehired by the Ministry of Public Works and the United States Agency for International Development in the building of the coastal highway from Boca de Río Indio to Gobeá. This new project was festively announced in a public meeting in February 4, 1980, in the *Playero pueblo* of Gobeá (west of Río Indio).

This meeting was attended by the Minister of Public Works, members of the National Guard, and the Representative of Río Indio and Gobeá to the National Assembly. The former Mayor of the district of Donoso, a *Playero* of the *pueblo* of Miguel de la Borda, also attended to express his disappointment that the road would not extend to Miguel as he had planned when he submitted the proposal to the national budget. Since the meeting occurred during the ritual season of the *Congos*, the ritual players of Miguel de la Borda, Gobeá, and Boca de Río Indio were officially invited to attend. The *Micé* or queen of Río Indio, whose husband had been a temporary laborer in rebuilding the school, composed and sang a special song for this occasion. She described this as a *Leva de Congo* (spirit lifter of the

Congos), which are often composed to relate current events. The former Mayor asked her to sing this while the *Playeros* attending the meeting were asked by the Minister to sign the contract and pledge their "community participation" so that the USAID funds could be released. The song not only reflects the wishful expectation of another "boom" of wage labor, but also makes reference to the marketing of foodstuffs that have to be taken out of the region to the urban transisthmian center. The Minister and other officials danced with the *machas* (women) while the *Micé* of Rio Indio sang the verses as follows:

Leva de Congo a la Carretera
(Congo Spirit Lifter for the Highway)

Contestación (Coro)

*No queremos pica,
queremos carretera.*

Answer (Chorus)

We don't want a trail,
we want a highway.

Versos

*Queremos la carretera
para sacar el maíz.*

*Queremos la carretera
para sacar el frijol.*

*Queremos la carretera
para sacar la verdura.*

*Queremos la carretera
para sacar el arroz.*

*Lo que quiere Gobeá,
lo que quiere es su carretera.*

*Que lo que quiere Miguel,
lo que quiere es su carretera.*

*Vivan los Representantes,
vivan los representantes.*

Verses

We want the highway
to take out the corn.

We want the highway
to take out the beans.

We want the highway
to take out the greens
(tubers and bananas)

We want the highway
to take out the rice.

What Gobeá wants,
what it wants is its highway.

That what Miguel wants,
what it wants is its highway.

Hurray for the Representatives,
hurray for the Representatives.

*Vivan los trabajadores,
vivan los trabajadores.*

Hurray for the laborers,
hurray for the laborers.

*Que lo que quiere Gobeá,
lo que quiere es su carretera.*

That what Gobeá wants,
what it wants is its highway.

*Viva la carretera,
viva la carretera.*

Hurray for the highway,
hurray for the highway.

Summary

The development process of the *Playero pueblos*, the specifics of which will now be summarized, illustrates a community system that is as distinctive of the *Playeros* as the system of *principales* that was described for the *Naturales*. The significance of the development systems of these two groups lies in their different responses to external influences without succumbing to exploitation. A variety of reasons account for the differences in their responses: social organization, world view as reflected in ritual traditions that telescope the social organization, and geographic or spatial accessibility.

The *Playeros* (people of the beach) of the Lower Coast are Afro-Americans who reside in *pueblos* at the mouths of rivers by the seashore and who cultivate a coastal strip of 3-5 km inland. The *pueblos* represent a semi-urban system of development of the Afro-Americans whereby 20 or more households, not necessarily related by kinship, become nucleated and establish economic and political relations among themselves and with other Afro-Americans in the Lower Coast and in the transisthmian center. This system of relations reflects an ethnic identity as Afro-Americans that is reinforced by annual participation in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*." This tradition is a condensed historical narrative of Afro-American experiences in the Isthmus of Panamá. Along with mortuary rites, it serves as

a ritual of intensification that telescopes the nature of the *Playero* community in which both men and women hold bureaucratic positions but also maintain subsistence production and commercial activities.

As exemplified by the case of the *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio, Afro-Americans residing in the inland coastal zone became true "people of the beach" when they moved to the river mouth in response to maritime contact by international import-export traders who created a series of "times of value" or cash "booms-and-busts." This seaward move is similar to the coastal adaptations of other human groups in the Caribbean side of Lower Central America such as the *Miskito* of Nicaragua and the *Cuna* of Panamá (Helms 1978:121-149) and the Afro-Americans in the northeastern Upper Coast of Panamá (Drolet, Patricia 1978:2-3). As with these other coastal people, the adaptations have been dual in the sense of having access to resources in both the littoral zone as well as in the inland, forested, mountainous zone. In the case of the *Playeros*, this dual adaptation has been accomplished by interdependent relations with the inland *Naturales* with whom they have shared the resources of the region.

Their greater geographical accessibility on the coastal strip as well as their expertise in maritime transportation linked the *Playeros* more readily with the political economy of the transisthmian center. This has enabled different *Playero* entrepreneurs to develop economic and political careers for themselves and their children in the region and in the transisthmian center, thus gaining control of the governmental bureaucracies in the districts of Chagres and Donoso of the province of Colón. By their participation in bureaucratic employment in institutions at the national and provincial levels, the *Playeros* asserted the preeminence of their *pueblos* in political, economic, and educational affairs. From *Pla-*

*yer*os in the districts of Chagres and Donoso came most of the appointed mayors, judges, treasurers, school teachers, and the elected councillors. The *Playero pueblos* became the seats of provincial and central government agencies including the judicial district courts. The *Playero pueblos* became the major collection points and marketing sites of foodstuffs and other resources of the region. Political, economic, and educational programs and policies from national centers were received and incorporated first at the *Playero pueblos* and then transmitted from there to the inland, upriver settlements of the *Naturales*.

This bureaucratic experience has provided the *Playeros* with knowledge about legal processes. They have applied this legal knowledge in various ways. First, they formed a union of truck-drivers in 1956, and a union of laborers at the Amsterdam Agricultural Company in 1964. Labor contractors with the Dutch company also appealed to legal processes to settle conflicts with the Dutch. District officials of Chagres arraigned the Dutch company legally in 1964 to pay district land taxes, in the same way that the Rio Indio Company had been arraigned during the vegetable ivory boom for not paying national land taxes. Bureaucratic connections have also enabled the *Playeros* to negotiate "national development projects" in the coastal strip, such as the construction of the "production schools" and the coastal highway. As sources of temporary wage employment, these projects have largely replaced for the *Playeros*, more than for the *Naturales*, the previous "times of value" in gathering and cultivating natural products, although some *Playeros* cultivate coffee in the contemporary "time of value" of this product in the region.

The perpetuity of the system is ensured by a demographic process whereby there is a steady flow of young women and men from the *Playero*

pueblos into the transisthmian urban center. In the urban centers they utilize educational channels beyond the regional primary levels and acquire skills for placement in prestigious occupations in the urban centers as well as in the region. They reactivate continuously the connections between the region and the transisthmian urban centers, particularly during ritual events like the "Play of the *Congos*" and mortuary rites.

Although the *Playeros* have scheduled their time and labor as an adaptive response to cash rendering activities, they have nevertheless continued gathering and producing foodstuffs for themselves and to sell to personal networks in the urban transisthmian center. These subsistence activities are continued because sources of cash have mostly been temporary, not substantial, and decreasing in value in the contemporary inflationary trend in the world economy. The importance of these foodstuffs is best exemplified by the *Playero* households that sell "witch hogs" in the transisthmian center. This trade involves professional members of the households, such as school teachers who reside in the transisthmian center, and their parents, siblings, and coparents in the *pueblos*. During the two-and-a-half month strike by school teachers in September-December 1979, there were two *Playero* school teachers residing in the transisthmian area who intensified their moonlighting activity as intermediaries in the marketing of "witch hogs" that their parents and siblings helped to buy and butcher in the *pueblo*. This activity allowed these school teachers not only to survive themselves during the strike, but to assist coworkers in the city by selling pork 30-40 cents less per pound than the price in the urban food market. They have been doing this marketing activity for the past ten years.

The implications of this type of rural food production for urban populations in Latin America have been discussed by Portes (1978) who considers this a means of subsidizing inexpensive labor for the national and international political economies of the contemporary world. Suffice it here to state that the case of the peoples in the Lower Coast is not yet entirely one of a complete move from subsistence to capitalism as has been reported for the *Interiorano* sugar cane growers on the Pacific side of Panamá (Gudeman 1978). Twice in this century, in the face of large-scale capitalistic enterprises like the Rio Indio Company and the Amsterdam Agricultural Company, *Playeros* and *Naturales* have resisted succumbing entirely to this system, thus retaining a certain degree of autonomy about when, where, to whom, and how to schedule their time and labor even if by so doing they have been viewed as "unproductive" by national and international high level political and economic decision makers.

Notes

- 1 An exception to this naming practice is the euphemistic change of *Lagarto* (Alligator) to *Palmas Bellas* (Beautiful Palms) in the 1940s for the *pueblo* on the western bank at the mouth of the Lagarto river.
- 2 One of these Chinese assistants, who is still alive in Colón, recalls how one of the wholesalers, for whom he had gone to work after the store of his brother closed, ordered him to go to Rio Indio, against his will. One of the storekeepers at El Chilar had requested from the wholesaler the services of an assistant to man the store while the retailer made business trips to Colón to sell the export products and buy new stocks.
- 3 Although *Naturales* would periodically paddle downriver to gather ivory nuts to sell to the Chinese (Martínez 1976), this could only be done during limited periods of time when they were free from agricultural activities (July 1979 a:12-13).
- 4 Although the population of turtles in the Caribbean coast of Panamá has been decimated by overfishing as has occurred in Costa Rica and Nicaragua (Nietschman 1973), turtle shell continued to be bought by Chinese storekeepers at the public market in Colón in disregard of national measures to protect this resource.
- 5 Most of the patronal festivals of *Playero pueblos* occur during the rainy season (May-December) when there is smooth sailing along the coast, thus reflecting the early travelling pattern of the missionaries aboard the sailboats (July 1978).
- 6 In August 1979, at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio, a *Playero* set fire to the shed where the brother of his *Natural* wife was filling a gasoline tank for the outboard motor of the *asentamiento* store. There had been a long-standing feud between the two men in regard to land and animals that were controlled by the *Natural* as one of the *principales* of his extended family. Thus, it is plausible to believe that some fires are intentionally started.
- 7 This company was founded in 1912 to consolidate several exporting enterprises that had been in operation since the completion of the Panamá Railroad in the 1850s (Vásquez M. 1939). As occurred with railroad construction elsewhere, these were trades promoted to be able to transport cargo in the railroads). The Colón Import and Export Company was owned by Hurd and Wilcox (English), Sterns and Bartling (Canadians), De Leon and Toledano (of Jewish families in the Caribbean) (Vásquez M. 1939).
- 8 A similar experience was reported for the *Chocó* Indians and Afro-Americans in the southeastern province of Darién, by the Historian-Anthropologist Arturo Muñoz, of the University of California, during his lecture and slide presentation at the Museum of the Panamanian Man, October 8, 1979.
- 9 The first few years of operations, the monthly and annual reports of the Dutch were in English and Dutch, and only later in Spanish.
- 10 Alaka Wali (1980) reports a comparable case on the Pacific side of Panamá in the area where the Bayano Dam was built, southeast of Panamá City.

CHAPTER VI
THE MIGRATION OF THE *INTERIORANOS*

Introduction

For many of the countryfolk in the south central and western Pacific *Interior* of Panamá, development in this century has meant a continuous migration into forested areas in the northeastern and central sections of the Atlantic side of the Isthmus. This migration process includes a sequence of five phases: 1.) exploration of the forest through hunting and/or guided by previous migrants; 2.) purchase of usufruct rights and/or occupation by deforestation and cultivation of subsistence crops; 3.) instead of a fallow period after cultivation, seeding with grasses to establish pastures; 4.) bringing in cattle through bank loans, cooperative arrangements with other cattle owners, or independent purchase of cattle; 5.) selling the pastures and animals to bigger cattle producers and continue moving on into a new area.

This continuing process of expanding frontiers has been intensified and accelerated since the 1950s by the building of highways and their feeders. Through these routes the *Interioranos* have carried with them a cattle raising tradition that combined both large and small herds in the Pacific lowlands. Ethnohistorically, this cattle raising tradition can be traced to the Spanish occupation of the Pacific lowlands. Ethnosemantically, according to classifications used by the *Interioranos* and acknowledged by the *Naturales* and *Playeros*, a small herder is anyone who has as

many as 60 head of cattle.

The coexistence of small and big herds implied the transformation of the small herds into bigger herds through a process of consolidation by the big herders buying the small herders out and/or employing the small herders to continue expanding pastures. This transformation or consolidation process was modified in the mid 1900s by the big cattle producers to include the transformation of pastures into industrialized agriculture of sugar cane, rice, and tomatoes in the Pacific lowlands. This industrialization process proletarianized some of the population of *Interioranos* into wage laborers. Those who lost lands through consolidation and transformation processes and yet wanted to continue the small herding tradition and subsistence cultivation are some of the migrant *Interioranos*. Others are those whose lands became extremely parcelized through inheritance practices.

At any rate, the migrants have been encouraged in continuing the cattle raising tradition by the increased demand for beef in urban centers in Panamá and abroad. The commercialization of beef for national and international markets has linked the migrants with national and international banking systems that extend credit for cattle production. They have also been linked with large-scale capitalistic investors like insurance companies and construction companies which have bought extensive tracts of land in the Lower Coast to buy and fatten yearlings. In this new form of transformation and consolidation, some *Interiorano* migrants aspiring to economic and political status act as intermediaries between the small herding migrants and the big capitalist investors.

Since migrants have the implicit expectation of improving their living conditions by the move, migration can be regarded as a development process in terms of these expectations. The probabilities of realizing those expectations often depend on the type of encounters with other human

populations who may either resist or incorporate the migrants into their socio-cultural systems. Therefore, the migration of the *Interioranos* into the Lower Coast will be described and analyzed in terms of their relations with *Naturales* and *Playeros* of the Rio Indio and how the migration process contrasts with the development processes of the other two groups. These inter-ethnic relations will be presented in Chapter VII. This Chapter VI will first define the identity of the migrants ethnosemantically and ethnohistorically. The latter will provide a time depth by which to evaluate the persistence of their tradition as cattle raisers and their linkages with the national political economy of the transisthmian center. The migration routes will then be described. Finally, the implications of migration as development will be discussed in terms of national and international development programs.

Who are the *Interioranos*?

As Identified by *Naturales* and *Playeros*

Naturales and *Playeros* identify the *Interioranos* according to criteria which are geographic, physical, linguistic, and socio-cultural. Geographically, the *Interioranos* are *gente de afuera* (people of the outside). In this case, "outside" connotes an area external to the Atlantic region and not to the "outside" by the river banks within the Lower Coast. The "outside" external to the region refers to the Pacific side of the Isthmus, across the Continental Divide. This external outside is divided into two areas that are also distinguished by two different periods of major movements of people into the Atlantic. If "outside" is qualified by "Penonomé," it identifies the *Cholos penonomeños* of the mountains of Coclé who are ethnically the same indigenous people as the *Naturales*. The only differ-

ence is that these outsiders come from the Pacific side of the mountains rather than the Atlantic, and often that distinction is not clear as the province of Coclé and its district of Penonomé extend into the Atlantic. If "outside" is qualified by "*Interior*," it refers to the southwestern Pacific and includes the provinces of Chiriquí, Veraguas, Herrera, and Los Santos. While "outsiders of Penonomé" moved to the Atlantic side at the beginning of the 1900s during the One Thousand Day War and the vegetable ivory boom (July 1979 a), "outsiders of the *Interior*" are more recent migrants beginning with the 1950s (Camargo et al. 1967). The latter are the *Interioranos* of this chapter.

Naturales and *Playeros* identify the *Interioranos* by their phenotype. In general, the *Interioranos* are described as *coloraos* (*colorados* = reddish). This color refers to the pinkish suntan acquired by fair-skinned people, in contrast to the more melanic pigment of the indigenous *Naturales*. The *Interioranos* are also described as being generally taller than the *Naturales*.

The speech of the *Interioranos* is also distinguished as linguistically different from that of the *Naturales* and *Playeros*. Rhythm, intonation, and lexicon are the principal distinguishing characteristics. Flora, fauna, and objects made from natural materials such as calabashes and gourds are described by the *Interioranos* in different terms than the words used by the *Naturales* and *Playeros*.

The *Interiorano* tradition of extensive cattle raising distinguishes them from *Naturales* and *Playeros* who have been mostly producers of hogs and fowl and fishers in the rivers and the sea. As will be recalled, the "Coclé Reservation" was created in 1914 to protect the *Naturales* from extensive cattle raisers in the Pacific lowlands and who wanted to use the moun-

tains as a transhumance zone when the savanna dessicates in the dry season. In their coastal strip, the *Playeros* have been primarily gatherers of turtles and fish as well as producers of hogs and fowl. Although *Naturales* and *Playeros* value beef cattle as food and as a commercial product, and do raise some cattle, they have mythological and rational reasons for not engaging in extensive cattle raising. Both *Naturales* and *Playeros* relate myths of evil spirits extracting the tongues of cattle and of visions of the devil among cattle. Since cattle are a sign of wealth, people who are wealthy are often said to have traded the afterlife of their souls with the devil in order to possess wealth such as cattle during their life on earth.

These myths reinforce the following limitations that they experience in raising cattle in this region and that they voice quite explicitly. There are three principal disadvantages. The first of these is the great number of buzzards that scavenge along the shoreline often extract the eyes and the umbilical cord of newborn calves, if someone is not present soon after delivery to protect the calf. Secondly, once dense root systems of some of the grasses take hold, it is extremely difficult without a deep penetrating instrument to either restore the land for cultivation or realize the regeneration of secondary growth. Thirdly and most importantly, there are constraints in the means of transportation in the marketing of cattle. Cattle often die from cramps after being transported for long hours with their legs bound inside a narrow canoe. If submerged in the river and tied to the sides of a canoe or raft, the animals lose weight from the immersion. They also lose weight when pulled with ropes over long distances along the shore or up and down the mountains. If the animal does not meet the minimum weight required at the slaughterhouse, then it cannot be sold in the

urban centers. If sold as a calf or a heifer to intermediaries who then resell the animals to big cattle owners for fattening in their pastures, then there is the risk of not getting enough money from the intermediaries who buy *al ojo* (by eyesight) guessing the weight of the animal. If butchered within the region, it is only profitable to sell beef on feast days when part of the animal is sold as cooked food to the great number of people who assemble; or, when a great number of laborers are needed and pounds of beef are exchanged for labor time based on the current monetary value of both beef and labor in the countryside; or on the pay days when the *Playeros* receive their wages.

Consequently, *Naturales* and *Playeros* have traditionally raised and marketed more swine than cattle. In contrast, the *Interioranos* like extensive pastures and a great number of cattle, and they specialize as intermediaries in the marketing of cattle. As cattle people, the *Interioranos* uphold the Hispanic tradition of horsebackriding and bullfighting.

For *Naturales* and *Playeros*, a horse was, as recently as 20 years ago, mainly a beast of burden and not a means of personal transportation. *Naturales* and *Playeros* are mainly canoe operators and long-distance walkers, which are regarded as safer means of transportation in the orographic and fluvial environment of the Lower Coast. With the arrival of the *Interioranos*, however, *Naturales* and *Playeros* are beginning to use the horse more as a means of personal transportation.

Bullfighting on feast days is something that *Naturales* and *Playeros* say had not been done in the Lower Coast prior to the arrival of the *Interioranos*. The migrants have also influenced feast days with their *típico* (typical) country-style music. As recently as ten years ago, dancing music on feast days in the Lower Coast was usually provided by local musicians.

Nowadays most festival dancing, except the ritual dancing of the *Congos*, is to *típico* music by groups of *Interioranos* who play in "dancing gardens" in the urban centers. Many of these *Interiorano* musical groups have promotional contracts with breweries, soda and rum manufacturers. These beverage manufacturers often act as sponsors of feast days in rural areas to promote the sale of beverages. These companies install portable wooden dance floors, protected by portable tin roofs. Through advertising on the radio and television, these companies have popularized *típico* singers and this has led to a competition among rural communities for the prestige and status of contracting one of these singers instead of local musicians. This means that a great portion of the festival funds now goes to cover the expenses of musicians and beverages. (See Appendix III for the expenses incurred for the patronal festival of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio in 1979.)

The demographic processes of the *Naturales* and *Playeros* include moving and relocating at a new site but differ in certain aspects from the migration of the *Interioranos*. The fissioning process of the system of *principales* of the *Naturales* implies relocating at a new site but is then followed by a sedentary, gradual process of establishing a kin group over three or four generations while solidifying their claim on that territory. This claim includes the right to secondary forest in an area that was cultivated by the *principales* as long as 20 years previously but was allowed to regenerate secondary growth which serves as a boundary marker. Due to the low population density in the Lower Coast, there was enough space for the *Naturales* to allow for long-term regeneration of forests along with the process of fissioning off and claiming new territories along the river banks. The *Interioranos*, on the other hand, are continuously seeking new

patches of virgin forest that can be first cultivated and then converted into pasture, eventually reselling the pastures to bigger cattle owners and landlords. Since the banks of the major rivers are already claimed by *Naturales* and *Playeros*, the *Interioranos* move to the inland interstices between the major rivers. (See Map 1.2 for the relative spatial distribution of the three human groups.) Since the *Naturales* and the *Playeros* have already established educational and other facilities, the *Interioranos* use these facilities rather than setting up their own facilities.

Similar to the *Playeros* from urban centers who return to their *pueblos* in the Lower Coast for ritual events, the *Interioranos* return to their provinces in the Pacific *Interior* for feast days. They visit relatives and reinvest their savings in buying land or building concrete houses in the *Interior*. In other words, they identify their homeland as the Pacific *Interior* rather than the Lower Coast. They also send their children to be educated in high schools in the *Interior*. While the *Playeros* go into professional careers in education, law, and public administration, the *Interioranos* pursue careers in agronomy and agricultural engineering in addition to school teaching and politics. Like the *Playeros*, the *Interioranos* also become truck owners and drivers and effectively compete with the *Playeros* in this regard. They are also effective competitors in politics, particularly in areas where they have settled in great numbers. These differences and similarities, however, are best understood by first looking into the historical origins of the *Interioranos* and into the types of relations that they establish with *Naturales* and *Playeros*.

As Defined by Themselves

The *Interioranos* identify themselves by all the foregoing characteristics that are ascribed to them by *Naturales* and *Playeros*. In particular, the *Interioranos* consider themselves phenotypically different from *Naturales* and *Playeros*. For the *Interioranos*, the *Naturales* are *Cholos* in the literal sense of the term, that is, a dark-skinned person of Indian ancestry (Robe 1960:28; Gudeman 1976:65). This meaning is equivalent to that of the term *Naturales* as used by the Afro-American *Playeros*. Unlike the *Playeros*, however, the *Interioranos* share with the *Naturales* their social identity as *campesinos* (people from the countryside). The *Interioranos* refer to the Afro-Americans as *Negros Costeños* (Coastal Blacks). There is, however, no racial discrimination by the *Interioranos* against *Naturales* and *Playeros*. In fact, one of the migration strategies is to establish marital relations with *Naturales* and *Playeros*, to gain access to lands. Since many migrants come first as unaccompanied men, marital relations occur commonly between *Interiorano* men and *Natural* and *Playero* women.

The *Interioranos* differentiate themselves from other *Interioranos* by their province of origin. In other words, they are *Chiricanos*, *Veraguenses*, *Herreranos*, *Santeños* from the provinces of Chiriquí, Veraguas, Herrera, and Los Santos respectively. Many make annual visits to their provinces of origin where they continue having socio-economic ties. This is particularly true when parents are left behind in the native province. Whereas *Naturales* and *Playeros* consider the Lower Coast as their homeland, most *Interioranos* regard the Pacific side of the Isthmus as their cultural-geographical base regardless of how long they have been on the move.

The *Interioranos* also distinguish themselves as being harder and more productive workers than *Naturales* and *Playeros*. This impression that

the *Interioranos* are harder, more productive workers is shared by people from Europe and the United States. The Dutch at the palm oil plantation of Icacal would fly in *Interioranos* as temporary laborers when "problems" arose among *Playero* and *Natural* laborers. It was easier to recruit *Interioranos* since there are regular market places for hiring laborers in the Pacific Interior (Gudeman 1978:125). Cultural geographers from the United States have also evaluated migrant *Chiricanos* as more intensive, better organized producers than the Indian and Afro-American groups in the southeastern provinces of Panamá and Darién to where the *Interioranos* have also moved (Paganini 1970:122-141; 228-232).

The *Interioranos* in the Lower Coast consider themselves harder workers because they slash-and-burn greater amounts of forest, in shorter periods of time, and plant greater amounts of rice, beans, sugar cane, and grasses than *Naturales* and *Playeros*. The forest in the Lower Coast is a sign of the low productivity of *Naturales* and *Playeros* according to the world view of the *Interioranos*. The presence of the forest justifies the maxim of the "Conquest of the Atlantic" voiced by government officials (El Dominical-La República 1977:70; Chen et al. 1977), which indirectly encourages the migrants to think of the region as virgin land to be conquered.

Historical Identity and Causes for Migration

From the 16th to the 18th century, a great number of the Spanish bourgeoisie in the urban transisthmian center moved to the south central and western Pacific lowland of the Isthmus (Jaén Suarez 1978:70-74). Their move was triggered not only by the destructive attacks of English pirates in the transisthmian center, but also by the high cost of living

in the urban centers (Jaén Suarez 1978:70-74). Additionally, there were regular influxes into the countryside by dissident Spanish soldiers and families who had enlisted to colonize Perú and Chile but stayed in the Isthmus instead. They generally moved to the Pacific lowlands and became food producers (Castillero Calvo 1971:70-71). Thus the Pacific lowlands became known to the Spaniards as the *Interior*, that is, inland and away from their point of arrival on the Atlantic and away from the transisthmian route between the oceans.

There were two major consequences as a result of the Spanish population in the Pacific lowlands. First, in addition to depopulation from epidemics and wars, there was dispersion of the Indian population in the lowlands towards the mountains of the Continental Divide to avoid direct domination by whites and mestizos who gained control of the lowlands (Jaén Suarez 1978:70-74). Thus the highlands and the Atlantic slope became a region of refuge for the Indians. Secondly, the whites and mestizos became the major producers of foodstuffs, particularly beef, for the gold mines of Veraguas (Castillero Calvo 1971:67) and for the urban transisthmian center (Jaén Suarez 1978:70-74). This changed the agrarian ecology of the lowlands from an Indian agricultural system based on the cultivation of corn, fishing, and hunting (Cooke 1976) to a cattle raising system with extensive pastures for grazing animals (Jaén Suarez 1978:70-74). Cattle raising was supplemented with the commercial production of sugar cane, salt from the seashore flats, and carbon for cooking from the extensive mangroves by the Pacific shoreline. In addition to commercial cattle raising, small producers grew their own subsistence crops. The Spanish cattle raising activity, coupled with Indian swidden agriculture, were cultural factors that, along with edaphic and climatic factors, caused

the formation of the savannas of the Pacific lowlands (Fuson 1958:10-66). The Pacific savanna contrasts quite dramatically with the Atlantic rain-forests, and *Naturales* from the Atlantic when crossing the Continental Divide into the Pacific side will comment about this contrast.

During the republican era of Panamá in the 19th and 20th centuries, the rural groups on the Pacific lowlands continued being the major beef producers for the transisthmian center. In the 1800s when Panamá was an affiliate state of the Great Colombia, cattle raising in the Pacific *Interior* was largely controlled by a number of dominant white families of Spanish origin who had descended from the bourgeoisie that had moved to the countryside in the 17th and 18th centuries (Figueroa Navarro 1978:101-129). These families formed not only a regional endogamous group, but they also had direct political alliances with the Chamber of Representatives in Bogotá, Colombia (Figueroa Navarro 1978:101-129). Along with this ruling oligarchy, there was a white and mestizo population of smaller, independent food producers. It is this sector of small, independent producers who have led the migration of *Interioranos* into the southeastern Pacific provinces and the north central and eastern Atlantic region in the 20th century. This migration has been triggered by several factors, to be explained as follows.

The urban transisthmian center and its demand for foodstuffs was created by transoceanic routes across the Isthmus, first the Spanish trails for mule trains built in the 1600s and 1700s (Joly and Bohn 1978) and then in the 1800s the railroad built, owned, and operated by an engineering company from the United States. The construction of the canal in the early 1900s by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, after the failure of the French in the latter 1800s, increased even more the transisthmian

urban population engaged in the international cash economy. Concomitantly, this increased the urban demand for food, especially for beef. In 1970 population density in the transisthmian center exceeded 100 persons per km² (Recreo 1976:16-17). Population also increased in the Pacific *Interior*. In contrast to the Atlantic Lower Coast with a density of 5 or less persons per km², population density in the south central and western Pacific provinces was 25-49 persons per km² in areas of Coclé, Veraguas, Los Santos, and Chiriquí; 50-99 persons per km² in the districts of Barú and David in Chiriquí; and over 100 persons per km² in the district of Chitré in Herrera (Recreo 1976:16-17). This increase in the rural population caused increased parcelling of the land, particularly in the Azuero peninsula where it had long been a practice to divide land equally among all heirs (Heckadon Moreno 1977a:124).

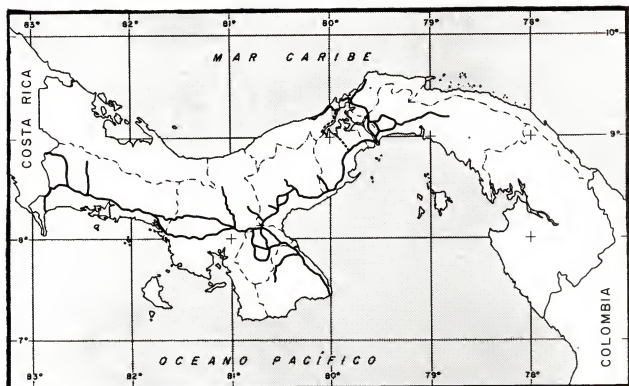
There was also expansion and penetration of national institutions and large-scale capitalism in the Pacific *Interior* since the independence of Panamá from Colombia in 1903. The ruling republican elite was a continuation of the same colonial endogamous oligarchy that had commercial and political ties between the Pacific lowlands and the urban center. They, therefore, influenced the expansion of national institutions and large-scale capitalism in the Pacific countryside. This expansion included, among other things, the Boston Panamá Development Company's rubber and coconut plantations in the Azuero peninsula; the United Fruit Company's banana plantations in Chiriquí; the private and national sugar mills in Coclé and Veraguas; the Swiss Maggi food processing industries in Coclé. These private and national enterprises not only controlled large tracts of land directly and indirectly, but also transformed subsistence and small commercial producers into proletarian laborers of capitalist enter-

prises (Gudeman 1978).

All the foregoing events have influenced the migration of *Interioranos*. First, the *Interiorano* tradition of commercial production of beef cattle has responded to the increased demand for beef from the transisthmian urban center which generates the cash that food producers nowadays require more and more in the national economy. Secondly, land in the Pacific *Interior* has become a limited resource due to increased population, hereditary parcelling, control of large tracts by national and private enterprises, deforestation and severe soil erosion caused by overgrazing and overburning. For all these reasons, the migrants keep on the move seeking new forests to convert to pasture.

The Migration Routes

The *Interioranos* have several migration routes into the Lower Coast. The primary route out of the Pacific *Interior* is the Panamerican Highway that in the 1950s and '60s improved a previous lowland highway built in the 1920s and 1930s. From Panamá City in the Pacific, the *Interioranos* either continue southeastward following the Panamerican Highway to Darién, or they go northward to the Atlantic following the Transisthmian Highway that the United States Army built as an emergency road during World War II and that parallels the canal and the railroad. From the Atlantic city of Colón, if they have not settled along the Transisthmian Highway, the *Interioranos* have the alternative of either following the coastal highway built by Panamá in the 1960s into the eastern Upper Coast or westward into the Lower Coast through either the coastal or the lake roads that the United States Army also built during World War II. The coastal road is the one that now reaches as far as Rio Indio, while the lake road follows



Map 6.1 The Highway System and Feeder Roads Used by the *Interioranos* in their Migration

the northwestern shoreline of the canal's Gatún Lake.

Since the construction of the canal, the northwestern shores of Gatún Lake had been settled by Afro-Americans and *Naturales* who had been displaced by the flooding of the lake, or had been laborers in the railroad and the canal, or had worked for the Goodyear Company rubber plantations in this area during the first rubber boom, or had later been independent banana producers during the banana boom. Moreover, the settlements of Cuipo, Cirí, and Ciricito near the western shores of the lake had become marketing sites for the *Naturales* who live along the Cirí Grande river and other streams that flow parallel to the Río Indio on the east side of the Indio but empty into the lake rather than into the Caribbean. As in the coastal section, Afro-Americans control transportation by truck or by motor launch in the northwestern section of the lake. For the *Interioranos*, it was an advantage that there were already well-established, regular marketing routes that linked the coastal and lake areas with the urban food market in the city of Colón. The *Interioranos* also took advantage of the fact that the *Naturales* and the Afro-Americans preferred settling along the major waterways, leaving unoccupied portions of the inner spaces between the waterways. These are the spaces that the *Interioranos* have filled.

Another major migration route of the *Interioranos* has been through the northwestern districts of Capira and La Chorrera of Panamá province. This area has several advantages as a migration front for the *Interioranos*. The Capira and Chorrera districts are relatively near to Panamá City. The marketing of cattle through land trails and feeder roads is easily accessible to the towns of La Chorrera and Arraiján that have become major suburban areas of Panamá City. The mountains of the Continental Divide

east of Cerro Trinidad drop in height in the northwestern section of Capira and Chorrera. This permits an easy access to the Atlantic¹ and the southwestern shores of Gatún Lake. As in the case of the northwestern shores of the lake, there was no restriction for people to settle along the southwestern shores since the western section of the lake was outside the United States administration of the canal. By 1970, population density along the western shoreline of the lake was in excess of 100 persons per km² (Recreo 1976:16-17).

The districts of Capira and Chorrera in general, and the southwestern shorelines of Gatún Lake in particular, serve as a temporary migration station for *Interioranos* that eventually move further northwestward into the Atlantic. At this temporary stop they acquire information, make contacts and contracts. Some contracts involve purchasing usufruct rights to land from previous and older migrants. Others contract themselves as tree-fellers for older migrants who allow the newer migrants to cultivate the newly slashed-and-burned area for 2 or 3 years before seeding it with grasses. This is the same tactic for extending pastures that has been used by big cattle owners on the Pacific lowlands. Another type of contract made at Chorrera is to sign up for a small cattle loan (US\$5000-US\$8000) with the Bank of Agricultural Development, a subsidiary of the Inter-American Development Bank. Once access is gained into the Atlantic, the loan is transferred to the Colón branch of the bank as one of the development programs encouraged by the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy is cattle raising in the district of Chagres (Dirección de Planificación y Coordinación Regional 1979). For those migrants who have become bigger cattle owners, greater credits are available from the National Bank on a joint program with the World Bank to develop cattle raising in the district

of Chagres of Colón province (Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977:108-112). For some *Naturales*, to be an *Interiorano* is often synonymous to being a *prestamista* (one who has a cattle loan from a bank). Paradoxically, soliciting credit has been described as something that *Interioranos*, particularly those from Los Santos, will not do as it goes against their pride and individualism (Heckadon Moreno 1977a:125).

If the *Interioranos* take the route across the northwestern section of Capira and Chorrera, this places them more directly within the high-land zone of the *Naturales*. If they follow the Transisthmian Highway and then take either the coastal or the lake feeder roads into the Lower Coast, this brings them more directly within the coastal strip of the *Playeros* and the Afro-Americans in the northwestern section of Gatún Lake. The tactics differ somewhat with regard to which section of the Lower Coast they come into, either the inner highlands of the *Naturales* or the coastal and lake shorelines of the Afro-Americans. In other ways, the tactics are similar. The cases examined in Chapter VII will serve to illustrate these tactics and the networks or relations that are established. Map 6.1 shows the highway system and feeder roads used by the *Interioranos* as migration routes into the Lower Coast.

Migration as Development

Migration has been an adaptive and expansionist human activity since prehistoric times. Sometimes migration may be a seasonal movement between two or more areas. At other times there is permanent resettlement at a new site without returning to the former place of residence. Whether seasonal or permanent, most migrants have the implicit expectation of improving their living condition by the move. In terms of these expecta-

tions, migration can be regarded as a development process. The probabilities of realizing those expectations often depend on the types of encounters with other human populations who may either resist or incorporate the migrants into their socio-cultural systems. This section, therefore, will summarize salient aspects of the relations of the *Interioranos* with *Naturales* and *Playeros*, who were already residing in the Caribbean region of the Lower Coast long before the migration of the *Interioranos* from the Pacific to the Atlantic side of the Isthmus. Chapter VII will present specific cases to illustrate these relations.

The *Interioranos* have tried to have symbiotic relations with *Naturales* and *Playeros*, using the facilities that these two groups had already established through their own processes of development. The *Interioranos* have also engaged in kinship and ritual coparenthood relations with *Naturales* and *Playeros* as an attempt of incorporation within these two other human populations. Intermarriage has been more readily established with the *Playeros* at Boca de Rio Indio than with the *Naturales* at Santa Rosa and Uracillo. On the other hand, ritual coparenthood has been more readily established by *Naturales* at Santa Rosa and Uracillo with *Interioranos* near these settlements, than between *Playeros* and *Interioranos* at Boca de Rio Indio.

Households composed entirely of *Interioranos* have only been able to settle at the fringes of the *Playero pueblos* and the boundaries of the territories of the *Naturales*, and away from the banks of the major rivers. Except for special permits for school children, *Interioranos* have not been able to reside permanently within the nuclei controlled by the *principales* of the *Naturales*. Even though they reside at the *pueblo*, the *Interioranos* have only been able to live at the outskirts of the *Playero pueblo*.

This marginality, however, is illusive. Bolstered by a cultural tradition of cattle raising that has conferred power and wealth to those who have traditionally governed the Isthmus since Spanish colonialism, the *Interioranos* have been able to effectively occupy in great numbers the inland spaces between the major rivers and that had been left as forest reserves by *Naturales* and *Playeros*. It is in their world view of the forest and its use as a natural resource that the *Interiorano* process of development differs most drastically from those of the *Naturales* and the *Playeros*. For the *Interioranos*, the forest is an area that needs to be converted into pasture for extensive cattle raising. This world view ignores the fact that the forest has for a long time been used by *Naturales* and *Playeros* as a resource of natural materials for the building of houses and the manufacture of handicrafts; the hunting and gathering of foodstuffs and commercial products like vegetable ivory and rubber; the raising of great numbers of pigs in its shady, humid environment and the use of forest fruits for fattening pigs; and finally as a natural fertilizer of crops by allowing long-term regeneration of the forest in swidden agriculture.

In other words, the indigenous process of development of the *Interioranos* is based on deforestation for extensive cattle raising. Although their migration is triggered by social and ecological factors in the Pacific lowlands as well as the demand for beef in the transisthmian urban center, it is the existence of extensive forests in the Atlantic slope that has attracted the *Interioranos* in great numbers. This world view of the forest as an unused territory is also upheld by the central national government which has been controlled since Spanish colonialism by cattle raisers of the white and mestizo population of the Pacific lowlands. The view of the national government is embodied in the phrase "The Conquest of the Atlantic"

that has guided the plans for the development of the Atlantic and as proposed by the revolutionary government in the 1970s.² Cattle raising is a major objective of these plans as set forth by the National Bank of Panamá and the World Bank in their study of the feasibility for the development of cattle raising in the Atlantic sector (Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977) and by the Directorate of Regional Planning and Coordination in their outline for the integral development of the province of Colón (Dirección de Planificación y Coordinación Regional 1979).

That the *Interioranos* are a key element in these development plans by the national government is best exemplified by the fact that the *Interioranos* migrating to the Lower Coast have become the major users of cattle loans by the Bank of Agricultural Development, a subsidiary of the Inter-American Development Bank. Even though a rural sociologist had reported that *Interioranos* like those from Los Santos province do not like to use credits from national government agencies in their home province in the Pacific lowlands (Heckadon Moreno 1977 a, b), the *Santeño* migrants in particular take out cattle loans from the Bank of Agricultural Development during the migration process. That this is a migration tactic is clearly demonstrated by three events. First, the loans are secured at the agency of the bank in Chorrera on the Pacific side of Panamá province prior to their move into the Atlantic. The loan is then transferred to the bank agency in the Colón province after the move. Secondly, the loan serves as a territorial claim that justifies deforesting the boundaries of the territories held by the *Naturales*, resting assured that the office of Agrarian Reform regards all land as state land to be used by all people, particularly those who have cattle loans since both the office of Agrarian Reform and the Bank of Agricultural Development are agencies of the Minis-

try of Agricultural Development. Third, the knowledge that the National Bank will make available larger loans for extensive cattle raisers who will buy and take over pastures established by the smaller cattle raisers.

Extensive deforestation by the *Interioranos* serves another purpose for the national government other than cattle raising through bank loans. Namely, the *Interioranos* are a human mechanism that effectively and rapidly clears land making it easier for surveying and road building. The increase in population density brought about by the migration of *Interioranos* into the Atlantic justifies the building of roads in areas where they have settled in great numbers and have "developed" by cattle raising. In other words, the roads are justified on the basis that they serve to transport the products of the region to the urban markets. Production is mainly viewed in terms of cattle; whereas, *Naturales* and *Playeros* have had a long history of marketing great numbers of hogs, coconuts, bananas, and coffee without the support from the national government in road building. In February 1980, the newspapers announced the schedule for the signing of contracts by members of communities in the provinces of Coclé and Colón. The communities would sign an agreement to provide preventive road maintenance for rural access roads to be built by a joint project of the Ministry of Public Works of Panamá and the United States Agency for International Development (Colón al Día, *La Estrella de Panamá*, 3 February 1980: B-16). In the Colón province, the access roads will be built in areas where the *Interioranos* have settled in great numbers; namely, the northwestern shoreline of Gatún Lake, the inland space between the Indio and Gobeá rivers where *Interioranos* from the Herrera province have moved in great numbers in the 1970s, and in the area of Nombre de Dios in the eastern Upper Coast where *Interioranos* have also moved in great numbers

in the 1960s and '70s.

Since the development process of migration of the *Interioranos* coincides with the development plans and programs of national and international agencies, this gives the *Interioranos* political leverage. While the Afro-American *Playeros* have developed their political linkages by placing their educated youth within the provincial and national bureaucracies, the *Interioranos* acquire their political power by moving in great numbers to the Atlantic to produce beef for the transisthmian urban area. It is questionable, however, whether encouraging migration for extensive cattle production will indeed "develop" the Atlantic side of the Isthmus or create similar edaphic, climatic, and socio-economic conditions as exist on the Pacific side and that paradoxically are causally related to the migration of the *Interioranos*. Where will the *Interioranos*, *Naturales*, and *Playeros* go when the Atlantic replicates the serious conditions existing in the Pacific; namely, severe soil erosion, long periods of drought, large tracts of land under the control of big cattle owners and extensive industrial production?

Concluding Remarks

In general, the *Interioranos* have established symbiotic relations with *Naturales* and *Playeros* in the Lower Coast. Since certain socio-cultural aspects of the *Interioranos* are similar to that of the *Naturales* and the *Playeros*, the migrants have been able to compete effectively with the other two groups. This competition leads to both amicable and antagonistic relations. The migration strategies also reveal that the *Interioranos* initially deal with other *Interioranos* who have preceded them in the migration process.

Notes

1 The low altitude in this area is one of the reasons for the proposed route for a sea level canal by the Japanese (Ventocilla 1980).

2 The government slogan for the "Conquest of the Atlantic" of Panamá is similar to the government slogan for the "Awakening of the Atlantic" in Nicaragua, as follows:

For the revolutionary government, the Atlantic region is an important one, as a billboard in Managua advertised: *La Costa Atlántica: Un gigante que despierta*, "The Atlantic Coast: A giant that awakes." The promise is of new land for Nicaragua *campesinos* and new areas of production to increase the level of yield of the nation as a whole. The perspective is a bit reminiscent of the Australian colonist view of an "empty continent"--ignoring that it was filled with aboriginal people. In a similar vein, one might observe that the Atlantic Coast has not been asleep, but expanding somewhat uneasily (Adams 1981:16-17).

CHAPTER VII

RELATIONS OF *INTERIORANOS* WITH *NATURALES* AND *PLAYEROS*

This chapter will examine cases of relations of *Interioranos* with *Naturales* and *Playeros*. This will serve to illustrate the tactics and the systems of relations that the *Interioranos* establish with the other two human groups in the Lower Coast. The cases are based on relations with *Naturales* in Boca de Uracillo and Santa Rosa de Rio Indio and with the *Playeros* at Boca de Rio Indio. Some of the events illustrate inter-ethnic relations among all three groups, reflecting their relative position within the political economy of the nation as a whole.

Relations between *Interioranos* and *Naturales*

Relations between *Naturales* and *Interioranos* were briefly mentioned in Chapter III which presented the case of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio as an example of the system of *principales* of the *Naturales*. To recapitulate, it was mentioned that an *Interiorana* woman resided with her grandchildren at the nucleus of the settlement; that an *Interiorano* man had married one of Rosa's and Teya's greatgranddaughters; that Santa Rosa joined the *asentamiento campesino* (planned agricultural settlement) as a protection from *Interioranos* infringing upon their territory. These points will be expanded in this section. In addition it will be explained how an *Interiorano* school teacher replaced Rosa's and Teya's son as Representative to the National Assembly, as well as types of services that *Interioranos* have

volunteered to do for the *Naturales* at Boca de Uracillo, the parent settlement from which Santa Rosa fissioned off. Although voluntary services are amicable in nature, other activities by *Interioranos* antagonize *Naturales* and cause a certain amount of concern and apprehension.

Residential and Marital Relations

Santa Rosa de Rio Indio

The Case of a *Santeña* Woman and Her Family

In 1964, a 42-year-old woman left Los Santos province with her two daughters and six sons. Her first seven children had been fathered by a man who had left Los Santos long before they did. Her last child was fathered by another man since her first husband never returned to Los Santos. He had bought a piece of land in the district of Chorrera of Panamá province. That is where they went in 1964. The children built a house in their father's land and they lived there until 1970. During this period, the two daughters married other *Santeño* migrants in Chorrera.

In 1970, the father had the children evicted from his land by signing a request for this to be done by the office of Agrarian Reform. The three oldest sons then left Chorrera for the Chagres district of Colón province. They followed the northwestern route along the Gatún Lake shoreline. They were guided by another *Santeño* man who told them that he knew where there was a piece of virgin forest to be had for free. This was not true. The forest had a usufruct owner, another *Santeño* man, who wanted US\$300 to transfer her rights in writing to the three brothers. They bought the rights to this site near the western shores of Gatún Lake. This was at La Encantadita, near to the marketing and transportation site

of Cuipo on the lake shore. The siblings and the mother moved to the new site, except for one of the sisters who remained with her husband in Chorrera. The cattle loans that they had signed for in Chorrera were transferred to the Colón agency of the Bank of Agricultural Development. One loan was taken out by the unmarried brothers as a group, the other by their brother-in-law.

In 1974, they moved again farther westward, to an area near the northeastern boundary of Santa Rosa de Rio Indio. The area is actually an interstice between the settlements of Santa Rosa, La Encantada, and Las Cruces. The reason for the move this time was that two of the brothers married women from the *Naturales* at La Encantada, and the brother-in-law established coparenthood relations with the *principales* of Santa Rosa. He asked Rosa's and Teya's oldest son for permission to build a house at the nucleus of Santa Rosa for his daughters and youngest brother-in-law to attend school there. His mother-in-law, that is, the grandmother and mother of the children, would live with the children at the nucleus. On weekends, he or his wife would bring foodstuffs for the grandmother to cook. On holidays the children would go inland, and the grandmother would go to her unmarried sons. This arrangement was congruent with the residential pattern of *Natural* households away from the nucleus but having another house at the nucleus. Moreover, he and his brothers-in-law would assist with community tasks such as the *fagina* (the "task" to clear vegetation at the nucleus, cemetery, and trails). This was also congruent with the community labor of the *Naturales*. Permission was granted.

Most likely they will remain affiliated with Santa Rosa until the children complete their primary education, and then they may move again as exemplified by the migration history of the young *Santeño* man who

married Rosa's and Teya's greatgranddaughter.

The Case of a Young *Santeño* Man

In 1956, at age 7, the young *Santeño* man left Los Santos province with his parents. His parents had no usufruct rights to land in Los Santos. They had been working in lands of his father's sister's husband, but it was a small parcel and badly eroded. The yields of rice and corn were poor. His father bought from another *Santeño* man the usufruct rights to a parcel in Chorrera. They later sold it and moved to the western shores of Gatún Lake, in an area on the limits between the provinces of Colón and Panamá. They remained there for nine years while the children attended primary school. They did not own usufruct rights at this place, another *Santeño* allowed them to cultivate foodstuffs and sugar cane in his land as long as they agreed to seed it in grasses at the end of each swidden cycle. Their cash came not from cattle but from sugar cane. They sold molasses, raw sugar, and rum. The rum was bootlegged to bars in the town of Chorrera.

After having extended the pastures considerably, the *Santeño* landowner told them that they had to move out as he was selling the pastures for US\$3000 to another *Santeño*. He would pay them US\$40 for seeding the grasses. When they argued about such a low payment for their labor, the landowner said they could stay if they paid him US\$2000 in cash. They decided to move further north into Colón province, by the northwestern shores of the lake, at La Encantadita, near Cuipo. There they bought usufruct rights to a piece of land for US\$250.

By that time, the boy had become a young man. He decided to go to Panamá City to be a wage laborer. He found a job in a jalouisie facto-

ry. He saved some money and went to Costa Rica on a pleasure trip. When he returned to Panamá City, his father's brother got him a job at another industrial company. After two years and ten months of work there, he fell from a company truck and broke a leg. He asked for his holiday pay and injury compensation. The company paid him US\$1682, with which he made the down payment for a loan with the Bank of Agricultural Development for eight heads of cattle. He cut a patch of forest on the eastern boundary of Santa Rosa to seed grasses for his cattle. He built a house for himself and brought a young woman from Herrera province to live with him. She missed her family who remained in Herrera and left him.

After the *Herrerana* woman left him, he began courting Rosa's and Teya's greatgranddaughter. The girl had been raised by her grandparents, that is, Rosa's and Teya's oldest daughter and her second husband, who regarded her as a daughter. It was her grandmother's husband who objected to her union with the *Santeño*. She left the territory of Santa Rosa and went to live with the young man at his house. A series of misfortunes occurred to them there, including the burning of the house and serious illness of their first child. In order to have the child treated at a hospital in Panamá City, the young *Santeño* returned the cattle to the bank which paid him US\$296 but told him that he owed the bank US\$200. He agreed to do this with wages that he would earn in Panamá City.

In 1979, they returned to Santa Rosa, as she missed her relatives and life was too expensive for them in the city. Her grandmother, as a member of the *principales*, asked them to stay and they now live in the inland section of Santa Rosa close to her grandparents. He works with his father and siblings, however, outside the eastern boundary of Santa Rosa, with cattle that they also took out on a loan from the bank. He

used the masonry skills that he acquired in Panamá City at a school for the unemployed to assist in the building of the water reservoir for the aqueduct at Santa Rosa. This incorporated him as a member of the community labor system.

Boca de Uracillo

Residential and marital relations between *Interioranos* and *Naturales* at Boca de Uracillo differ in some ways from those in Santa Rosa. There are no *Interioranos* impinging upon the western forest boundary of Uracillo. Neither are there households composed entirely of *Interioranos* residing within the territory of Uracillo. There are, however, three marital unions between *Interioranos* and *Naturales* among the 64 households of Uracillo. These include two males and one female *Interioranos* married to two females and one male from the *principales* of Uracillo, respectively. Two of these unions were initiated in the city of Colón in the late 1960s when a man and a woman from Uracillo were wage laborers in Colón like the *Interioranos*, too. In these two cases, the *Interioranos* are from the southwestern province of Chiriquí. Moreover, they are both from the district of San Lorenzo in Chiriquí and come from settlements that have feeder roads that connect with the Panamerican Highway. While these two *Chiricanos* followed the Transisthmian Highway to the Atlantic side of the Isthmus, the other *Interiorano*, a *Santeño* man, followed the route across the Capira-Chorrera districts of Panamá province.

The *Santeño* man is a school teacher and his case exemplifies the political power that their great number has given the migrants in Panamá province. *Interiorano* teachers activate their linkages in the Ministry of Education in Panamá City to be appointed to schools that are located in

the upper reaches of the Rio Indio and that fall under the jurisdiction of the provinces of Coclé and Panamá. They thus compete effectively with the Afro-Americans who also get appointments in this area since many schools fall under the supervision of the Directorate of Education in Colón, because of greater geographical accessibility through Colón in the past. Unlike the Afro-American school teachers in this section, the *Interiorano* school teachers become food producers also. They soon start raising their own animals and cultivating food and commercial products by establishing work relations with the parents of school children. Like the Afro-Americans, *Interiorano* school teachers also become political candidates, as occurred in the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada of which Santa Rosa is a part and as will be explained in a subsequent section.

The Territorial Threat of the *Interioranos*

The great number of migrants coming through the Capiira-Chorrera route to the western shores of Gatún Lake has increased greatly the population density in the lake area. In 1970 this density was over 100 persons per km² along the shoreline, decreasing to 24 persons per km² away and westward of the lake toward the Rio Indio. Nevertheless, 24 persons per km² contrasts with only 5 persons per km² along the Rio Indio and west of it. The advancement of *Interioranos* westward of the lake poses a territorial threat to the *Naturales*.

It was the infringement of *Interioranos* into their forest boundary that partly prompted the *Naturales* of Santa Rosa to join the *asentamiento campesino* program of the Ministry of Agricultural Development. The *asentamiento campesino* program had originally been conceived by the Agrarian Reform as a transitional phase between the acquisition of a parcel of land

by the state and its final conversion to private property by specific individuals or families (Heckadon Moreno 1977b:8). The people at Santa Rosa had been informed by officials of the Agrarian Reform that their land would be legally titled if they joined the *asentamiento* program. They joined in 1972.

By 1976, they became concerned that they had no legal ownership. Yet, the *Interioranos* kept infringing upon their territory and cutting the forest boundary. The members of the *asentamiento* of Santa Rosa appealed to the Agrarian Reform to stop these advances. On two occasions in 1976 and 1977, the Agrarian Reform officials intervened in their favor. In 1978 and 1979, however, when they again notified the Agrarian Reform of further advancement by the *Interioranos*, no action was taken. The people of Santa Rosa were told that all land belonged to the state; and that the *Interioranos*, through their individual bank loans for cattle, had as much right to use of the state land as the collective right of the *asentamiento* of Santa Rosa which also had a bank loan.

This dual policy was adopted to mitigate the discontent of the *Santeños* against the *asentamiento* program, and to respect their cultural tradition of individualism (Heckadon Moreno 1977a). This duality in policies, however, seems contradictory and adverse to the *Naturales* if their collective rights in the *asentamiento* are not acknowledged also. Otherwise, the protection promised by Agrarian Reform is only a fiction.

At Boca de Uracillo, the *Interioranos* are not yet actually cutting the forest boundary as in Santa Rosa. However, people in Uracillo and other nearby settlements are concerned by an initial tactic used by the *Interioranos* to survey the territories of the *Naturales*. This is the tactic of hunting used by *Interioranos* living along the western shores of

Gatún Lake. The *Interioranos* regularly hunt with their dogs and rifles in the forests south and west of Uracillo, San Cristobal, and Coquillo. Hunting is a surveying tactic used by the *Interioranos* to see what is available in terms of forests that the *Naturales* may not be using. The *Interioranos* do not distinguish nor acknowledge usufruct rights to secondary forest that has been allowed to regenerate as long as 20 years like the *Naturales* do. Therefore, this is a bone of contention between *Naturales* and *Interioranos*.

While hunting, the *Interioranos* also approach isolated households, especially of old people, who are not affiliated with any particular nucleus of *principales*, to see if they want to sell their usufruct rights to a parcel of land, particularly coffee groves. This gives the *Interioranos* access to areas that are at the interstices between territories controlled by the *principales*. It limits the space for expansion of the *Naturales* by the fissioning off process of the system of *principales*.

Finally, hunting by the *Interioranos* removes food resources out of the networks of food reciprocity used by the *Naturales* for wild meat. The *Naturales* particularly resent the fact that the *Interioranos* sell hunted animals by the pound to other *Interioranos* in the lake area where extensive deforestation has already been wrought by the *Interioranos* for their cattle pastures.¹ *Naturales*, therefore, are on the lookout when they notice *Interioranos* hunting. In one case observed at Uracillo, a *Natural* man diverted the path of a deer being chased by *Interioranos* and their dogs, and then directed the *Interioranos* toward the river and away from the forest to where the deer returned.²

The Political Threat by the *Interioranos*

The *Interioranos* have gained political leverage as an electoral population with their great number in the northeastern section of the Capira and Chorrera districts of Panamá province and in the western and northern shores of Gatún Lake in the Chagres district of Colón province. This will be illustrated with the case of the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada, Chagres district, to which Santa Rosa belongs.

The 1972 Constitution lowered the level of representation in the National Assembly from the provincial to the *Corregimiento* level in order to allow for wider participation of the lower classes like the countryfolk. As will be recalled, one of Rosa's and Teya's sons won the election of Representative for the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada to which Santa Rosa belongs. In the 1978 election, there were several candidates from the 12 settlements in the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada, including candidates from the *Naturales* and the *Interioranos*. An *Interiorano* school teacher won the election with the support of the great migrant population in the eastern section of the *Corregimiento*.

After the election, the *Naturales* realized that they should have united in backing one of their own, rather than having different candidates from their settlements. An opportunity to unite, however, occurred on February 21, 1980, at a meeting of the Chagres district council held in Santa Rosa. It was the first time in the history of the district that the council convened in the inland zone of the *Naturales* and not in the district capital in the *Playero pueblo* of New Chagres. The *Naturales* had put pressure on the *Interiorano* Representative of the *Corregimiento* of La Encantada, to have the meeting at Santa Rosa. Representatives act both in the National Assembly and in the district councils. The pressure was put

by the *Naturales* by refusing to pay the 50 cent tax per hundredweight of coffee sold, which was a new tax voted in 1978 by the Chagres district council (Consejo Municipal de Chagres 1979).

The tax was advised by the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy in order to raise municipal funds with which to cover municipal expenses and diminish dependency on the national treasury. In other ways, this was a means of levelling imbalances created by the greater salaries received by the Representatives in comparison to the lower salaries of the Mayor and other municipal officials. The municipal officials felt that they were being undermined by the Representatives even though the old political structure at the municipal level was allowed to continue along with the new Representative system. The new taxes would allow the municipal officials to get a raise in salary.

By refusing to pay the coffee tax, the producers had forced the district treasurer to collect the tax from the coffee buyers. At the council meeting in Santa Rosa, a number of different *Naturales* from various settlements individually rose to publicly voice their objection to the coffee tax. In general, their main objection was that they did not see how the tax would benefit them economically or in their settlements. They also submitted the proposal to have their own *Regidores*, who serve as tax collectors, receive a salary instead of the annual ten per cent from the total taxes collected by the end of the fiscal year. In addition to serving as tax collectors, the *Regidores* also have to handle cases of misdemeanors, and they were concerned about the increased number of knifings that had been introduced by the migrants at feast days. The proposal also asked for the formation of a special *Regiduría* at Santa Rosa, separating the settlements of *Naturales* along the eastern bank of

the Rio Indio in Colón province from the *Interioranos* east of them, in the lake area of the *Corregimiento*. This would ensure that taxes collected in their section remained within their section.

The council decided to reconvene in March 1980 in the district capital to consider the proposals. The issue, therefore, remained pending. It was evident, however, that the *Naturales* had coalesced against the political and economic threat posed by the migrants. At this meeting, it was also evident that the *Interioranos* and the *Playeros* had greater political status than the *Naturales* within the bureaucratic system; however, the *Naturales* were bravely defending themselves in public. That the *Naturales* posed a threat to the bureaucratic system was evident by the presence of national guards brought from *Playero pueblos* and the city of Colón and who stood on guard at the two entrances to the school building where the meeting was held. They were alert whenever a *Natural* spoke.

The Duality of Amicable and Antagonistic Relations

Within the cultural traditions of the *Naturales* and the *Interioranos*, there is a contrast in their systems of development. Within this contrast, at times similarities are of the sort that they permit amicable and cooperative relations between the two groups, but at times they evoke tensions and stresses between them. While territorial and political expansion of the *Interioranos* creates stresses, other relations are amicable.

Voluntary assistance in agricultural tasks is a general positive trait ascribed to the *Interioranos* by *Naturales* and *Playeros*. The *Interioranos* are willing to assist the *Naturales* and *Playeros* with the most menial as well as the most difficult tasks. They also like to offer suggestions about how things can be done. For example, they have suggested to the

Naturales at Boca de Uracillo to market cattle in Chorrera rather than Colón, and are willing to make arrangements with buyers from Chorrera and Panamá City while acting as intermediaries in the transaction.

In another instance, on February 1, 1979, four *Interioranos* from the Capira district volunteered for US\$10 each to act as bullfighters in the first bullfight that had ever been held in Boca de Uracillo. The bullfight was advertised as a special attraction in a feast that two households from Uracillo organized to generate capital with which to pay the annual interest on their cattle loans with the Bank of Agricultural Development. The organizers of the feast had seen bullfights among the *Interioranos* in the Capira-Chorrera area along the new marketing route that has developed with feeder roads that were cut in the 1960s and 1970s and that connect that area with the Panamerican Highway. *Interioranos* control the trucking service in these feeder roads. In fact, this new marketing route has led to coparenthood relations between *Naturales* of Boca de Uracillo and *Interioranos* in the Capira-Chorrera area. This follows a general pattern of people from Uracillo who during "times of value" in this century have usually established coparenthood relations with people living at the major marketing and transportation routes within the region. *Naturales* from Uracillo have called upon their *Interiorano* coparents not only to assist with the marketing of cattle through the Capira-Chorrera route, but also to come to Uracillo and assist in *ventas ~ juntas* (festive work parties) for slashing patches of forest in preparation for swidden agriculture.

Interioranos from the Capira-Chorrera area are also willing to volunteer their services as *maestros rezadores* (prayer masters) at mortuary rites of *Naturales* at Boca de Uracillo. This is particularly done by In-

terioranos from the province of Los Santos, who write down in notebooks prayers that they learn from other prayer masters. The *Santeños* take pride on themselves as being able to pray more rosaries than anyone else per night, which they accomplish by alternating different male and female prayer masters throughout the night. This contrasts with the single man among *Naturales* and the single woman among the *Playeros* when leading mortuary rites.

The *Santeños* also claim that they use old prayer formulas, including some in Latin, that are no longer used by the new Catholic liturgy of the lay Delegates of the Word who now conduct most of the mortuary rites among the *Naturales*. The *Interioranos* claim that the new simplified rites do not "recommend well" the soul of the deceased in getting the help of the saints and the virgin on the way to heaven. In other words, the old prayer formulas interject frequent appeals to the saints and the virgin prior to, during, and following the recitation of the rosary and the name of the deceased is often mentioned in these appeals. The role of the saints in the life of countryfolk in the Pacific side of the Veraguas province has been interpreted by Gudeman (1976:59) as follows:

The interest in and importance of the saints is congruent with the people's conception of God as an all-powerful but distant entity. Since Christ is not a mediating figure between man and God, this separation of the natural and spiritual presents a problem in that man seemingly has no direct link with God. It is, I suggest, the saints, the miraculous humans, who occupy the mediating position between man and God and who provide one means by which man can reach God.

Until the 1960s, the *Naturales* had prayer masters who followed the old prayer formulas and were even more poetically creative than the *Interioranos* in using allegorical references to natural events in the daily life of the countryfolk. This is exemplified by the following prayer composed by Anicéforo Alabarca of Uracillo and that was recorded in 1961 at

Guabal, on the Pacific side of the Coclé mountains, by A. M. Conte Guardia (1964), who reported it in her thesis with the linguistic characteristic of the *Naturales* in using /r/ and /l/ as allophones of each other:

Coro

*Que Dios lo saque de pena
Y lo lleve a descansar.*

Rezador

*Animas que van penando
por las orillas del río
con tabaco y sin candela
titiritando de frío.*

*Animas a caballo
que no se pueden arcanzar
porque andan muy de prisa
y no se pueden venerar.*

*Carne de gallo carato
que no quiso ablandar.*

*Alabado sea er Santísimo
Sacramento der altar,
y María concebida
sin pecado originar.
(Conte Guardia 1964; translation mine)*

Respondents

May God take him out of pain
and take him to rest.

Prayer Master

Souls that go in pain
by the river banks,
with tobacco but no fire,
trembling with cold.

Souls on horseback
that cannot be reached
because they go very fast,
and cannot be venerated.

Flesh of the spotted cock
that did not want to get tender.

Praised by the Blessed
Sacrament of the altar,
and Mary conceived
without original sin.

In the 1970s, the Catholic church initiated the training of lay Delegates of the Word and Catechists in the Lower Coast. Among the *Naturales*, these roles have been assumed by members of the kin group of the *principales* who introduced the chapels in the nuclei of their settlements. This is true at Boca de Uracillo. In 1979, a household in Uracillo used *Santeños* as prayer masters instead of Delegates of the Word. This household has been aspiring for several years to the status of the *principales* at Uracillo. As contenders to the status of *principales*, this household did not want to call upon the lay Delegates of the Word who are members of the kin group that has held the status of *principales* since the 1940s when they moved the school from Palma Real to Boca de Uracillo and also built

the chapel. Since they have no direct affiliation with the Church or the system of *principales*, the *Interiorano* prayer masters take advantage of lines of cleavage and rivalries inherent in the system of *principales* as well as the preference of some *Naturales* for the old prayer formulas.

Of greatest concern for the *Naturales* is the habit of knifing introduced by the *Interioranos* during feast days. This practice has been adopted by certain *Naturales*, particularly those who had previous histories as troublemakers. In the past, *Naturales* engaged in verbal and fist fighting when drunk on feast days, but not knifing.³ This has added another fear to the usual apprehension about the stealing done by *Naturales*, *Playeros*, and *Interioranos* to their own people and against each other on feast days. There are traditional and institutional means of handling theft and recuperating lost animals and items. Injuries and deaths by knifing, however, are tragic incidents that represent great personal losses. Moreover, a knifing cannot be readily resolved or avenged since any reaction sets up a chain response.

In short, the relations of the *Interioranos* with the *Naturales* are both amicable and antagonistic, and it is a duality that arises out of the encounter between two groups of people who in some ways are similar and in others are not.

Relations of *Interioranos* and *Playeros*

There are many more *Interioranos* residing among the *Playeros* at the *pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio than there are among the *Naturales* at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio and Boca de Uracillo. As was mentioned in Chapter V, seven of the 73 households at this *Playero* *pueblo* are composed entirely by *Interioranos*. They all reside on the outskirts of the *pueblo*, but like

the *Playeros* cultivate lands away from the *pueblo*, are employed at the palm oil plantation and school project, and also act as truck drivers and owners and market intermediaries. The latter two economic roles as truck drivers-owners and market intermediaries are particularly significant for they exemplify the linkages of the *Interioranos* with the urban political economy. This places them at a competitive level with the *Playeros* and above the *Naturales*.

In addition to these seven households of *Interioranos* at the fringes of the *pueblo*, there are six more households within the *pueblo* that consist of marital unions of *Playeros* with *Interioranos*. In five of these cases, the *Interioranos* are children of migrating parents. Although they were born either in the *Interior* or along the migration route, these five *Interioranos* arrived in the Lower Coast at a very young age and grew up among *Playeros* at this or other *pueblos* along the coast, east of Rio Indio. Not only have they married *Playeros*, but they actively participate in the ritual "Play of the *Congos*." Since they have fair skins, during the ritual play the men darken their skins with ashes and are allowed to act as *Playeros* and perform minor roles. The women sing and dance in the ritual house with their *Playero* husbands who are important members of the ritual community. Like the *Playero* women, these second generation female migrants also become lottery vendors.

In contrast to these second-generation immigrants that have become incorporated into the ritual "Play of the *Congos*," some of the first generation migrants at the *pueblo* maintain themselves ritually apart by their roles as Protestant missionaries, who provide services mainly for other migrants like themselves. In part, the adoption of Protestantism reveals the insecure and indeterminate identity that the migrant process imparts

on some of its participants. The adoption of Protestantism also reflects the economic constraints of migration and the need for economic support during the initial stages of migration. The case of the Soldiers of the Cross of Christ and the Jehovah Witnesses will be described and analyzed in the latter part of this section because they present a distinct contrast to the predominant Catholicism of *Playeros* and *Naturales*, who consider that they may not have legal status as citizens unless they are baptized in the Catholic Church.

Interiorano Truck-Owners Drivers and Market Intermediaries

Whereas the *Naturales* have not succeeded yet in competing with the *Playeros* as truck owners and drivers, the *Interioranos* have been able to do so in a relatively short period of time.

During the research period, the 12 trucks that ran the daily route between the *Playero pueblos* as far as Rio Indio and the city of Colón were owned and operated as follows:

<i>Pueblo</i> of Residence	<i>Playeros</i>	<i>Naturales</i>	<i>Interioranos</i>	Total
Palmas Bellas	8	0	0	8
Salud	1	0	0	1
Rio Indio	1	0	2	3
Total	10	0	2	12

As can be seen, there were no truck owners-drivers from the *Naturales* while there were two from the *Interioranos* in a union of predominantly *Playero* members. Whereas a truck owned by a cooperative of *Naturales* had been forced out of competition in the early 1970s, the *Interioranos* have been effectively competing with the *Playeros* since 1977. This has been

possible through the economic and political linkages of the *Interioranos* in the transisthmian urban economy. These linkages are equal in status to that of the *Playeros*, and both are higher than any leverage available to the *Naturales* at lower bureaucratic levels. This can best be understood by analyzing the histories of the union of truck owners of the *Playeros* and of the Cooperative of Las Mercedes of the *Naturales* which attempted to operate a truck of its own outside of the union.

The Truckers' Union

In 1956-57, five Afro-Americans formed the *Sindicato de Dueños de Carros de Costa Abajo* (Union of Owners of Cars of the Lower Coast). They were legally registered and obtained legal status. The main objectives were to agree on fares and to schedule their itineraries so that they could all share in alternate order the peak periods and days in the transportation of cargo and passengers. For example, during the research period, peak days were on Thursdays for the marketing of products from the region to the city and Saturdays for the return to the region by those who went on Thursday to sell foodstuffs and now returned with merchandise from the city to sell in their settlements. Also, many *Playeros* who are employed in the city use the trucks on Saturdays to go to their *pueblos* to spend the weekend at their *pueblos* and go back to work early on Monday morning. In addition, as a unionized group the truck owners could obtain licenses and permits at reduced rates.

The charter members were from the *Playero pueblos* of Palmas Bellas and Salud. One of the members from Salud owned two trucks, one that ran the coastal route and another on the lake route. In fact, he was an Afro-American originally from the *pueblo* of Escobal on the central northern

shores of Gatún Lake. He married a *Playero* woman from Salud. His wife's sister's husband worked for him as a driver so that they could alternate routes with his two trucks. The two routes are now separate. That is, owners cannot have vehicles operating in both routes but can operate several trucks in the same route, in which case drivers are hired. Regardless of the number of vehicles owned, all owners are also drivers of one or more of their vehicles. Each driver also has an assistant, usually a young man, who helps load cargo, change flat tires, and keep track of passengers getting off. This position, however, serves as an apprenticeship for someone aspiring to become a driver. As will be recalled, this type of structure conforms to the working pattern of the *Playeros* throughout this century as organized in sailing crews, tappers teams, and now truck union.

Since its inception, key positions in the union were held by members of the coastal route. In the mid 1970s, however, lake members took over the direction of the group. By the beginning of 1980, the coastal group was trying to resume the leadership. At any rate, all members meet informally almost every day during their waiting periods while parked at the terminal near the food market in Colón, as well as at the marketing site at Boca de Rio Indio. Since they are in daily contact with news at the marketing sites, they are very attuned to economic and political trends of their regular clients and their volume of trade, to which the truckers respond very keenly. This response is exemplified by their maneuvers to force out of competition the truck of the cooperative of *Naturales*.

The Cooperative of Las Mercedes of the *Naturales*

In 1969, the Cooperative of Las Mercedes was organized by a school teacher who belonged to the *principales* of Boca de Uracillo. He had been

influenced by the cooperative movement which he had seen in the *Interior* when he was assigned there as a teacher and had attended cooperative meetings. It was the time when General Torrijos had recently assumed power in 1968 and was encouraging the development of rural areas under his slogan *Soldado, campesino, machete y fusil unidos* (Soldier, peasant, bush-knife and gun united), a union that has been aptly analyzed by the French political scientist Pierre Gilhodes (1978).

When the school teacher returned to work in the Lower Coast as a regional school supervisor, he organized the Cooperative of Las Mercedes with 105 charter members from various settlements of *Naturales* along the Rio Indio. The cooperative was to serve multiple purposes, with plans to expand into various fields. Initially, however, it began with a retail store at the mouth of the river. The store was to serve not only as a marketing site for inland products, but also as a boarding house or storage place whenever people or products had to stay overnight at the mouth of the river awaiting a boat or a truck.

The cooperative began with an initial loan of US\$1300 from the Bank of Agricultural Development. With this low amount, the Federation of Panamanian Cooperatives did not require the appointment of an outside manager to supervise the operation. In 1973, however, the coop negotiated a loan for US\$10,000 to buy a new truck. With this high loan, the Federation sent a manager from Panamá City who was soon replaced by four different managers, each one serving only for a few months. These men had a salary of US\$400 per month from the cooperative funds. However, they did not reside in the region and only came occasionally to check the funds or the accounting.

Not only had the loan for the truck brought the imposition of managers from the outside, but the truck itself became a bone of contention between *Playeros* and *Naturales*. Since the beginning of this century, *Playeros* had always been in control of the transportation between the region and the urban transisthmian center, whether they were sailing captains or truck owners. For their operation, however, they depended on the products of the *Naturales* as much, if not more, than the products of the *Playeros*.

Although *Naturales* and *Playeros* have had long standing kinship and coparenthood relations, these networks are relied more upon by the *Naturales* among themselves as exemplified by the kinship base of the system of *principales*. Having for the first time a truck of their own represented for the *Naturales* a means of strengthening these networks and their own identity as *Naturales*. In other words, the *Naturales* preferred to patronize their own coop truck rather than the union trucks of the *Playeros*.

The truck union members did not like this, particularly since the coop truck had not been incorporated to the union. The union members, therefore, retaliated accordingly. First they would block all parking spaces at the terminal by the market in Colón so that the coop truck could not park there. The school supervisor from Uracillo appealed to a lieutenant in the National Guard in Colón to get a special parking place at the terminal in Colón for the coop truck. The lieutenant was invited to Rio Indio to see the facilities of the coop and its operations. The parking space was granted. Then the union members would not let the coop truck leave the terminal unless it went in a rotating schedule with the other trucks rather than taking off on its own. If people would sit in the coop truck and put their products there, the other truck drivers would get a regular street guard to get the people down and the products and make them

go in other trucks. As the street guards were not aware of the special permission granted by the lieutenant, the school supervisor had to get the lieutenant twice one day to have this clarified with the street guards.

Finally, the union truck owners applied for membership in the coop so that they could also have their trucks in the coop system. As a negotiation tool, the union argued that the bylaws of all national cooperatives state the the coop cannot descriminate against membership on the basis of race of color. They also emphasized that they were producers and residents in the region. The coop, therefore, was forced to accept three trucks of the union into the coop. The coop then assumed an added expense in the maintenance of these trucks which were old and secondhand, not new like the coop truck.

Paying a high salary for an outside manager and the high maintenance cost of the union trucks, the cooperative funds were soon depleted. The trucking operations of the coop were discontinued. Many of the coop members resigned. Even though they have the burden of an uncanceled loan, a few members have kept the store operating and which still serves as a resting and storing place for the inland *Naturales*.

The *Interiorano* Truck Owners-Drivers

With such a precedent, the two *Interioranos* who are now operating a daily run on the coastal route have proceeded with precautionary tactics that prevent retaliation. As will be recalled, the tactic used by the *Interioranos* for cattle loans is to take them out in a bank agency in Chorrera and then transfer it to the Colón branch. Similarly, the *Interiorano* truck owners register their vehicles in Chorrera and join their own union over there and that is incorporated to the National Federation of

Transportation. This guarantees them a licence and permits to operate in any other area where the Federation has operations. The permit can be easily transferred by activating the networks of *Interioranos* in high positions of the Federation of Transportation. Since the volume of trucking from the *Interior* is high, this gives the *Interioranos* leverage within the Federation.

Another precautionary tactic is to begin operations with small pick-up trucks that, of course, limit the number of cargo and passengers. Eventually they buy a bigger, new truck, as one of the two *Interioranos* did in 1979 after having been operating in the Lower Coast since 1977. Also, vehicles are initially operated only on marketing days, and the drivers act as buyers or intermediaries rather than truck operators. The foodstuffs are sold in suburban areas where *Interioranos* reside in the transisthmian center. After being buyers for a couple of years, then they may go on to become only truck operators.

The *Interiorano* Protestant Missionaries

As was mentioned in Chapter V, on the west side of the *Playero pueblo* of Boca de Rio Indio there are Protestant missionaries of the Soldiers of the Cross of Christ and the Jehovah Witnesses. The Soldiers of the Cross of Christ are *Interioranos* while the Jehovah Witnesses are *Guaymí* Indians who are fluent in Spanish. Although both groups work mainly along the coastal strip and have a few *Playero* members, they particularly attend to the needs of migrants. This is done in two ways. First, the bible studies that both groups sponsor provide a feeling of career development and formal education, as exemplified by the missionaries themselves who were also migrants initially. The Jehovah Witnesses especially conduct their teachings

in a style of formal education, with written tests that mix questions on bible readings with questions on other subjects like agriculture, hygiene, nutrition, and that are also part of the assigned readings in their bulletins and newsletters. This focus on personal development gives some sense of reassurance to the *Interioranos* whose ultimate migration goal is to find what is perceived as a career achievement as small producers.

It is the material assistance that the missionaries provide, however, that is of greatest help to migrants on the move. The Soldiers of the Cross of Christ have at Boca de Rio Indio a wooden house big enough to accommodate as many as 20 migrants, who usually come first in groups of men to explore the area and are later followed by their families. Moreover, the migrants already have references that they can stop at Rio Indio for food and shelter before continuing on their move southwestward. This information is provided at the Soldiers of the Cross of Christ commune in Chorrera that serves as a major sheltering center for migrants and a training school for missionaries.

Ironically, the shelter house of the Soldiers of the Cross of Christ at Boca de Rio Indio is in the care of *Cholos penonomeños*, the same people as the *Naturales* but from the Pacific side of the Continental Divide. They lived in the lower slopes of the mountains and were displaced from that area by migrant *Interioranos* from other southern provinces further west.⁴ Once displaced, they got caught up in the same migration movement along the highways, rather than crossing the Continental Divide, even though one of the members of this household had worked as a scout for the National Guard in the mountains and knows well the trails that lead from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

Notes

1 The Panamá Canal authorities are so concerned about this deforestation, overgrazing, and soil erosion in the watershed of the lake, that a 10-year reforestation project has been undertaken by the United States Agency for International Development and the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources of Panamá.

2 During the research period, several households of *Naturales* at Boca de Uracillo were keeping wild animals in a rudimentary process of domestication. These included wild bees, birds, deer, and rodents. Bees were kept in tree trunks hanging from the outside walls of houses. Birds were hybridized with chickens. Deer and rodents were fattened for future consumption. Since all these animals were kept within the premises of the household and visible to visitors, the animals were protected against the evil eye of persons by tying a piece of red cloth or string around the animal's neck. This successful practice in taming and domesticating wild animals could be useful in experiments on breeding these animals by the Ministry of Agriculture but such a potential has not yet been taken into account.

3 In referenceto her anthropological research in the Upper Coast in 1977-78, Patricia Lund Drolet of the University of Illinois-Urbana reported in personal communication that the Afro-Americans in the Upper Coast at first had pity on the *Interioranos* and helped them to settle, but now there is a lot of tension between the two groups. Afro-American women are afraid of walking at night because the *Interioranos* carry knives with them at all times. There are also bushknife fights among the *Interioranos* when they get drunk. The *Interioranos* are also competing with the Afro-Americans for political positions in the Upper Coast.

4 The migration process of women from the *Cholos penonomeños* has been analyzed by Gloria Rudolf Frazier (1976).

CHAPTER VIII

IMPLICATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT FROM BELOW FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM ABOVE

In Chapter I it was indicated that this dissertation was addressing the central problem of the contrast between indigenous systems of development of the peoples in the Lower Coast and the programs developed for them by external agencies. It was also indicated that the development process was quite different if it proceeded from "above" or from "below." In "development from above," an ideology, a model, a plan, a purpose, comes first, and the actual organization or structure is assembled afterwards. In "development from below," the on the ground organization is first based on the rule of residence of the people. The role of the anthropologist in development is to: 1.) mediate and interpret the ideologies and organizational structures of the "planners" and the "targets" so that they can establish a negotiation process; 2.) advocate for those intended to be the beneficiaries of the planned projects.

Now that the preceding chapters have covered the indigenous development systems of the people at Rio Indio, it is time to make a specific comparison between these indigenous systems and plans developed by outsiders for this area of the Lower Coast. It is the purpose here to examine the extent of congruency between the externally formulated plans and the internal conditions of life style and socio-economic activities of the peoples at Rio Indio. This will be done by the presentation of a specific case in which the applied anthropologist attempted to honestly and clearly trans-

late the socio-cultural data into creative and practical suggestions for improvements in the program effectiveness and cost savings. As will be restated, the latter includes the unquantifiable costs of human dignity and ecological conditions.

An outline of events will illustrate one of several situations that arose during the field work and which required the application of the data in suggestions to personnel in various institutions. The suggestions were made voluntarily, without monetary remuneration for the advisory role undertaken. Not to have charged for the services may appear to be questionable in the contemporary monetarized world, particularly in the United States. A purpose was being served by this task, however. This contribution was personally considered to be part of the field work, since the research proposal for a fellowship from the Inter-American Foundation had specifically stated that the research would serve as a training experience in applied anthropology by assisting in the coordination of social change programs.

In reporting how the data was applied in making suggestions, the intent is not to validate a personal position. Rather, the purpose is to explain the role of the applied anthropologist since little had been reported publicly about this type of service. It is necessary to have a broad spectrum of published materials on experiences of applying anthropological data in order that better academic training programs can be developed in this aspect of anthropology, which leads to better employment opportunities.

The Title XII Proposal from the Universities of Panamá and Delaware

The following chronological sequence of events will serve as an example of how some projects are planned "from above" by national and international agencies, and the implications of such a process for those who are targeted as the "beneficiaries." These agencies were approached by the anthropologist in 1979 in an effort to understand how their socio-cultural systems function, and also as a voluntary training experience in acting the applied anthropologist's role of mediator between the parties.

Santa Rosa and Boca de Rio IndioSaturday, January 27, 1979

The Dean of the School of Agronomy of the University of Panamá arrived at Rio Indio to visit Santa Rosa and also tour the rebuilding project of the Production School at Boca de Rio Indio. The manager of the Agro-Industrial Cooperative of Icacal acted as a guide for the Dean. The manager of the cooperative later informed the anthropologist that the purpose of the visit was to survey sites for a joint agricultural project between the University of Panamá and the University of Delaware.

Panamá CityMonday, February 5, 1979

The anthropologist went to Panamá City to interview the Chief of the Human Resource Section of the United States Agency for International Development and the Dean of the School of Agronomy, in their respective offices.

The Chief of the Human Resource Section of the USAID mission stated that the interest of the School of Agronomy in Rio Indio arose from a re-

port issued by a study team from the University of Delaware about their visit to Rio Indio in 1978. The USAID office in Panamá had not yet received a proposal from the University of Panamá, and were concerned that plans were being made by the School of Agronomy as if the project had been approved and funded. It was suspected that perhaps the School of Agronomy considered that the USAID mission was giving more attention to other agricultural institutions in Panamá and also wanted their share of the pie. A copy of the report from the University of Delaware study team would be made available to the anthropologist later in the week.

The Dean of the School of Agronomy informed the anthropologist that a senior faculty member of the school was in Delaware on an exchange program and was coordinating with the University of Delaware the possibility of a joint program. In 1978, the Delaware team had been accompanied to Rio Indio by personnel from the Catholic University Santa María la Antigua and not by personnel from the School of Agronomy of the University of Panamá. He had called upon the manager of the Agro-Industrial Cooperative of Icacal to accompany him, as the School of Agronomy had had a cooperative agreement with the palm oil plantation in a training program for agronomy students since the 1960s when the Dutch were in charge of the plantation. In the past, the Dean had visited the palm oil plantation but was not familiar with the sites where the Delaware team had been up the Rio Indio and at the mouth of the river and, therefore, he had gone to see what they were like.

The Dean invited the anthropologist to a general meeting with students and faculty of the School of Agronomy that had been scheduled for Thursday, February 8, at 3:00 p.m. A sociologist from the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy would talk to the students, as well as the

President of the Panamá Committee of Partners of the Americas who were also participating in the project.

Panamá City

Thursday, February 8, 1979

In the morning, the anthropologist picked up at the USAID mission the copy of the report from the Delaware study team. The section of the report that refers to Rio Indio will be quoted for the date of February 23, 1979, when the anthropologist mailed her comments to the Delaware team.

The meeting of the students and faculty of the School of Agronomy was held in one of their auditoriums. Personnel from the Agricultural Section of USAID were also there as observers. The Dean spoke first, explaining the interest of a joint project between the University of Delaware and the University of Panamá at Rio Indio. He was personally interested in the possibility of the commercial production of the palm *Guiljelma utilis* for exporting the heart of this palm as it was being done in plantations that he had recently visited in Costa Rica. It was later found out by the anthropologist from the Chief of Human Resources of USAID that a palm project would not be possible because there are very complicated and strict international laws regulating palm production. The Dean of the School of Agronomy did not seem to be aware of these regulations.

The female sociologist from the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy then explained the baseline methodology used by the Ministry in gathering socio-economic data through a questionnaire that is administered in a targeted area prior to initiating development projects. She and a coworker would later meet with the students who would be administering the questionnaire to give them further explanations about how to do this. The

data gathered through this method would then be used to write the proposal, as the Dean had requested assistance from the Ministry in the writing of the proposal.

The Dean then called upon the anthropologist to give a brief socio-cultural sketch of the peoples along the Rio Indio, especially in relation to agricultural production and marketing. The anthropologist first contrasted the questionnaire survey methodology of the sociologists, with the "live-in" participant observation of anthropology. She advised the students and faculty to spend time observing the actual practices of the people before beginning any projects, and to take into account that rural people are also knowledgeable about agricultural technology from their own practical experiences. They should also familiarize themselves with the terminology used by the peoples in classifying their ecological world and their agricultural and gathering activities. Attention should be paid to those fruits and nuts that the peoples at Rio Indio were using in fattening pigs; and that small animal production was in the care of women and children, not men, even though the men did most of the marketing. Attention should also be paid to how people dealt in their own ways with pests and diseases of plants and animals, and that excessive use of costly chemical pesticides and fertilizers should be avoided in demonstrating new technologies. In short, the students and faculty could also learn from the peoples in a reciprocal interaction. Since some of the students laughed at some of the examples, the anthropologist warned them that this would not be a proper attitude in respecting the dignity of the rural people.

The President of the Panamá Committee of the Partners of the Americas spoke on the news media campaign that she and her group would provide for the project, as they had already been doing. Such type of reporting

through the news media is often done in Panamá to generate expectations that give a false sense that things are being done, as a shaming mechanism to put pressures on agencies, and as an advertising means of social elites.

Santa Rosa de Rio Indio

Friday, February 16, 1979

An unexpected group of visitors arrived at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio while the Catholic missionaries were conducting their training seminar for Delegates of the Word and Catequists. The visitors included an Israelite fish farmer, the sociologist from the Ministry of Planning, two agronomy students, the agronomist who was acting as director of the Production School of Boca de Rio Indio, and the *Playero* Representative and Legislator to the National Assembly.

Members of the *principales* of Santa Rosa who were attending the seminar left the training center to take care of the visitors. The anthropologist was called upon to serve as an interpreter, as the Israelite fish farmer was more fluent in English than Spanish. He wanted to test the water of a stream near the nucleus of the settlement where an aquaculture fish tank could be built as part of the proposed Title XII project of the University of Panamá and the University of Delaware. According to the requirements specified by the fish farmer, the *principales* decided that the best stream would be the one that was already supplying water for the plastic piping aqueduct that had been installed earlier in the year.

After conducting his chemical paper test, the fish farmer stated that this inland water was more suitable for an aquaculture pond than the saline water near to the Production School in the littoral zone. He would

inform the Dean of the School of Agronomy about his findings and make recommendations for the tank to be built at Santa Rosa. The anthropologist suggested that the recommendations should include the participation of women in such a project as women among the *Naturales* fished while they washed clothes in the river and were also the ones in charge of small animal production. The anthropologist also mentioned that the *Naturales* had a fishing technique that required feeding fish in a stockade built in a pool in the river, and that this technology could be used as a transference step in introducing the aquaculture program (July n.d.).

Upon departing, the sociologist notified the anthropologist that the students and faculty of Agronomy were meeting with the sociologists on Thursday, March 8, to go over the questionnaire. The anthropologist stated that she would try to attend that meeting.

Colón

Friday, February 23, 1979

The anthropologist mailed her comments to the Delaware study team. The comments referred only to the section on Rio Indio of the report. The team had visited several other areas in Panamá before going to Rio Indio on their last day in Panamá prior to their departure.

To provide a better context for the comments of the anthropologist, the impressions reported by the Delaware study team will be quoted first, as follows:

June 24, 1978 - 7:00 a.m. Tour with Rector . . . from USMA and Professor . . . from the Sociology Department, and . . . son of Dr. . . . to Colón--the 3 stage locks, and Palma Bella, the Center for Adult Education for the region as administered by the Clarissean padres in an area of mostly coconut oil palm industry, with very poor roads and very difficult transportation systems with some cattle ranches near the dirt roads and a few electric lines powered by local diesel motor generators.

-- There is some considerable race problem existing between Protestant and Catholic negroes in these Caribbean coastal areas.

-- From Palma Bella, a two-hour dugout boat trip up the Rio Indio to Santa Rosa - we visited the Coffee Cooperative run by the Clarissian padres with considerable profit to the co-operative members. Everything that comes and goes to the Santa Rosa community is by riverboat, the only way of transportation, including coffee processing machinery and the coffee harvest.

-- There are about 65 families in Santa Rosa which produce about 50 tons of coffee per year at approximately \$52 income per 100 lbs. of coffee beans to which must be added, however, the cost of \$10 for transportation from Santa Rosa to Panama City.

-- The development has one piston pump in the center of the village, has one health center, one primitive church and one adult education center again financed with German missionary grants, and one sports arena and sports area for football and one gym, also one store with lots of cases of Pepsi.

-- There were no fruit trees and, surprisingly, there was no knowledge of home brew which could be of interest in lieu of spending the hard-earned money on beer or on Pepsi.

-- The priests are three in charge of this area for 20,000 people over a tremendously wide range with very slow transportation. Where there are dirt roads priests would benefit from the presence of a Land Rover car, four-wheel drive, which, however, is not present but badly needed.

-- Rector . . . is a very active, very effective leader in this Panamanian mission area as well as for his university USMA. Any projects of a sociological or nutritional nature could be effected very well through Rector

-- Rio Indio was very muddy all the way up, banks are eroding, and in some areas there were indications of high flood levels of 5 meters. Many of the little huts and settlements along the river were very neat and most of them had a few cows, pigs, ducks, chickens--others had none. Also there was a profusion of vegetation and forage production everywhere. Question, immediately, why does not every little house and settlement have a few animals and a garden and why don't they have fruit and nut trees? The priests are doing a tremendous adult education job but it appears that the education job should combine and include more agricultural training including the planting of trees, not only the education of how to read and write and how to get along within a cooperative.

-- The people seemed to be very happy and on a Saturday, very much interested in going to a local dance where there was much

beer drinking even though they had to go over a considerable distance.

-- There seemed to be many native plants and fruits that grow profusely but are not cultivated and harvested for export or for commercial purposes, which could very well be developed.

-- City of Colon - depressive; many sociological challenges; Free Zone market booming (Haenlein and Fieldhouse 1978:18-19).

The anthropologist mailed the following comments to the Delaware study team in regard to the foregoing report.

Dear Sirs:

Through the courtesy of . . . of USAID-Panamá, a copy of the report of your visit to Panamá in June 1978 was made available to me on February 8, 1979. I requested a copy of the report to familiarize myself with your recommendations, which Dr. . . . is taking into account in elaborating a request for USAID funds as you are well aware. Dr. . . . asked me to make comments on Rio Indio and on the proposed project at a meeting that faculty members and students of agronomy at the National University had with planners of the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy on February 8.

At this point you are probably wondering who am I and why was I invited to make comments on the project for Rio Indio. Let me, therefore, introduce myself. Since August 3, 1978, I have been living at Rio Indio doing a regional study in anthropology of this river system, under a 16-month fellowship with the Inter-American Foundation. The data is primarily for my Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Fl. Nevertheless, since I advocate the so-called applied anthropology and plan to work as such in Panamá, the data that I gather and my services are of course to be made available for any projects intended for the well-being of the people. Moreover, I strongly consider that before introducing any projects or changes, one has to first know the people and what they are doing on their own. Therefore, I am willing to share with you the knowledge that I have so far gained on the people of Rio Indio.

For purposes of the IAF fellowship, I received institutional affiliation from the Dirección del Patrimonio Histórico del Instituto Nacional de Cultura, the Universidad Santa María la Antigua, and the Vicariato Apostólico del Darién (*i.e.*, the bishop who supervises the Catholic missionaries working at Rio Indio).

Other relevant personal data is furnished in the attached

curriculum vitae.

Attached are my comments to your report, which include comments that I made to Dr....and his faculty and students and planners at the meeting of February 8.

Very truly yours,

The anthropologist

Comments:

p. 19, paragraph 1: Race problem between Protestant and Catholic Negroes in coastal areas.

This is not a problem of race but of differences in historic acculturation of black slaves during the colonial period. That is, English-speaking Protestants resulted in English colonies in the Antilles, while Spanish-speaking Catholics resulted in Spanish colonies in the Antilles and on the American continent.

This problem *does not* exist in the coastal area, except in the city of Colón. One of my findings is the Hispanization of the descendants of Anglo-Antillean black men who moved to the coastal areas after the construction of the Panamá Railroad and the Panamá Canal, and who married Hispanic coastal black women. This did not occur in the city of Colón, which has more of an Anglo (U.S.) history since it was founded in 1850 for the construction of the railroad.

There are race and cultural differences between the darker coastal people (not entirely black--there is much admixture with *Naturales*) and the upriver *Naturales* of an indigenous background. These differences create certain tensions and problems at times, among some people, with some derogatory name-calling. There are, however, many other social factors that ameliorate the problem, such as intermarriage, *compadrazgo*, trade, work, and sports relationships between the two groups.

Largely due to greater geographical accessibility, the coastal group has had more control of governmental positions, transportation, and education than the upriver people.

p. 19, paragraph 2:

This settlement at the mouth of the Rio Indio is not Palmas Bellas. Palmas Bellas is a settlement about 20 km east of Rio Indio, at the mouth of the Rio Lagarto. The settlement at the mouth of the Rio Indio, where you took the outboard-motor dugout, is called Boca de Rio Indio on the west bank and Pueblo Viejo on the east bank. Incidentally,

the west bank belongs to the district of Donoso, and the east bank to the district of Chagres, and this creates certain political differences.

p. 19, paragraph 3:

The Cooperative Luz Campesina at Santa Rosa includes not only the families at Santa Rosa, but families from further upriver. Aside from the shelling and buying station at Santa Rosa, the coop also has shelling and buying stations at Limón and at Uracillo, further upriver from Santa Rosa. Any projects to be worked out with the coop should therefore include not only the people at Santa Rosa, but the members at other settlements up and down the river.

There is considerable competition to the coop from a Chinese family that has set up shelling and buying stations of coffee at various points on the coast and up the Rio Indio. The coop faces the following problems from this competition:

1. Lack of funds to commence buying at high prices like the Chinese do at the beginning of the coffee harvest. In order to begin buying this year, the coop had to first negotiate a loan with CARITAS in January, while the Chinese had been buying since December.
2. Lack of trucks like the Chinese have to transport the coffee to processing plants; hence, the higher cost of transportation for the coop.
3. The Chinese provide to their shellers-buyers outboard motors and supplies to set up retail stores. This entices people to sell more to the Chinese.

In general, people could benefit from technical advice in the cultivation of coffee. Many coffee trees are old and very tall and do not produce that many berries. The people do insist, though, that they prefer the Costa Rican variety to other higher yielding varieties, because the Costa Rican variety can be harvested in the dry season, while the other varieties ripen the fruit in the rainy season when it is more difficult to harvest. These seasonal preferences of the people should be borne in mind.

p. 19, paragraph 5:

There *are* fruit trees and home brews. You were not there long enough to notice where the trees are located, nor to be invited to the corn home brew during the special occasions when it is made.

Admittedly, there are not that many fruit trees near the houses at Santa Rosa. However, most fruit trees and coconut palms and agricultural plots of the people at Santa Rosa are

located beyond the hill east (or behind) the settlement.

The fruit most regularly eaten throughout the year is the banana. The *guineo primitivo*, a very sweet variety belonging to the Cavendish sub-group of AAA bananas, is a special favorite. *Carisea* (a roasted pudding of *primitivo* banana with flour) and *bollos de jeta* or *bollos de primitivo* (a pudding of *primitivo* banana with flour boiled in special leaves) are considered to be delicacies eaten quite frequently.

Availability of other fruits vary with the season. For example, right now the *guanábana* (soursop or *Annona muricata*) and the *marañón de Curasao* (the Malay-apple or *Eugenia malaccensis*) are in fruit and are being eaten regularly in most settlements. The soursop is usually made into a beverage.

Chicha fuerte de maíz, a fermented corn beverage, is made especially for work parties called *antitas* ~ *juntas* and to sell at dances and other festivities. The sale of *Pepsi*, other sodas, beer, and rum represents profitable cash businesses. In fact, the sale of these bottled beverages during feast days is the principal cash-rendering activity to raise funds for such projects as the construction of health clinics, churches, aqueducts, and school kitchen-dining rooms.

There are definitely problems with pests on citrus trees and coconut palms at Santa Rosa and further upriver. Studies and techniques to control those pests would be greatly welcomed by most people, as they themselves have expressed to me and to the missionaries that they would prefer to grow more oranges and coconut palms, more than they are able to, due to the pests. Both products have good cash value in the local markets, and also have a high nutritive value for the people themselves in their food preferences.

p. 19, paragraph 6

There are now only two missionary priests working in the area. The third one, who was the favorite among the people, left on a scholarship for Rome.

In general, these young priests are well liked by the people, more so by the upriver people than the coastal people. There is such a degree of confidence of the people with the priests, that any titles of reverence are disregarded and the people call the priests directly by their first names.

The priests have trained lay men and women to serve as Delegates of the Word and Catechists, and these lay people are the ones who conduct the services. These services are not merely religious, but serve as programs of *conscientización* of the peasantry. The priests act as advisors who are consulted for a variety of matters. But, as stated by the bishop, the priests are primarily moralizers and not agricultural, technical,

or economic advisors.

Therefore, I do agree with you that the priests would benefit from technical assistance in training people in agriculture and nutrition.

p. 19, paragraph 7:

Also agree with you that the USMA could benefit from greater involvement of a sociological or nutritional nature in *rural areas*. Presently, most students at the USMA are only involved with urban problems and do very little field research in rural areas.

p. 19, paragraph 8:

Answers to your questions: "Why does not every little house and settlement have a few animals, and why don't they have fruit and nut trees?"

People have houses at various sites and there are seasonal residential patterns. Many settlements, including Santa Rosa, function as "school settlements." Some people reside at these settlements only during school days. Some parents have their children residing with grandparents near the school, but the parents reside and work away from the school site. Usually work sites, where fruit trees and coconut palms are located, are at about an hour's walking distance inland, away from the school site and away from the river banks.

In most cases, chickens and pigs are fed near the houses early in the morning or late in the afternoon, but the rest of the day are allowed to roam freely, scavenging on their own. One may visit a house at a time when the animals are roaming around elsewhere. Cows with young calves are usually kept near the house to be milked in the mornings during the dry season, when most cows breed. This is the time when milk is drunk at home, and also used to bottle- or gourd-feed baby pigs and hunting dogs. During the rainy season, however, the cows may be in pastures away from the houses. There is also the case of half-ownership of small animals like pigs, and of the alternate sharing in the care of these animals; *i.e.*, this month at A's house, next month at B's house.

In most cases, chickens, ducks, and pigs are primarily taken care of by women and children of either sex between the ages of 9 and 13. If a woman is sick, or has too many young children to care for, she may not have the time to care for small animals and will therefore have none. If the corn harvest has been poor, then there are not that many chickens kept because the women say that without corn the chickens lay only "food eggs" and not "fertile eggs" to hatch. They definitely prefer eggs to hatch, for chickens are valued mostly for their cash value in a sale than for their food value. Also, during the dry season, many women

prefer not to have chickens around the house because this is the time when chickens suffer pests like *moquillo* and chicken pox. Some women send their chickens away to other areas where, for some unknown reason, the people say the animals suffer less pests.

I strongly emphasize that any program with small animals--chickens, ducks, pigs, and rabbits (as you proposed)--should be directed primarily to the women and young girls and boys between 9 and 13 years of age. As one woman told me, the work of the women is not seen because it is in or near the house, while the work of the men is seen because they go out to the fields, deal with big animals, and do all the marketing.

p. 20, paragraph 2: Native plants and fruits for export.

a. There is one plant that is being used by some people to feed fish, in a rudimentary form of pisciculture. This I think merits further study, and I am willing to send you samples of the plant. It is the *hinojo sabalero* (*Piper auritum*). Paul Standley, 1928, *Flora of the Panama Canal Zone*, Smithsonian Institution, pp. 155: "*P. auritum*, abundant in open places on the Atlantic slope, is one of the species most easily recognized, distinguished by its very large, pubescent leaves with a deep basal sinus. This plant when crushed exhales a strong, characteristic, and agreeable odor, somewhat like that of sarsaparilla."

A family at Uracillo brings every day home from their pastures several stems and leaves of the *hinojo*. They say that they specifically leave this plant standing in their pastures to use it to feed fish. The stems and leaves are tied in a bunch. The bunch is then tied to a tree trunk or a tree root on the river bank, by a deep pool. All deep pools along the river are said to belong to particular families who live by the river banks. The pools then become feeders for fish. Once or twice a month, usually on dark moonless nights, the sons of this family go spear-fishing, with spears that they make themselves, face masks that they buy in the cities, and flashlights. On January 29, three of the sons of this family speared over sixty fish between 9:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. They attribute the quantity of fish to the fact that they regularly feed the fish at the pool with the *hinojo*.

Also worth mentioning is the fact that they only tree usually left standing by river banks is the *higuerón* (*Ficus glabrata*), as people say that fish feed on the fruit.

With any program of pisciculture, practices like these should be taken into account and the people who employ these methods are the ones that should be approached.

b. Dr. . . . is interested in the cultivation of the *pizvae* (*Guillemia utilis*) for export of the *palmito* or heart of the palm. This palm is already grown by the people at Rio Indio

for consumption and commercial sale of the starchy nut.

I have talked to several people at Rio Indio about growing the palm for the heart and not the nut. Most people consider that to grow the palm for export of the heart would require a plantation and not individual family plots. If a plantation should be set up as one of the facets of the project, I recommend that the social problems that the palm oil plantation at Icacal is facing should be first evaluated to anticipate and know how to deal with possibly similar problems. The production and economic management of the Icacal plantation is functioning quite satisfactorily. As a social endeavor, however, the coop is facing several problems including the supply and cost of food for the plantation workers and their families. The workers themselves distinguish a dichotomy between the economic production and their social lives as a cooperative community, and the problems that the latter entails.

p. 20, paragraph 3:

Just as you found Colón depressive, the matter of attitudes and feelings of depression is very subjective and one that I particularly cautioned the students and faculty at the National University that they will have to be extremely careful with their subjective behavior if and when they are sent to work at Rio Indio. There are many school teachers, medical doctors, advisors from the Ministry of Agriculture, and university students who are doing practical training in the field, whom I have met at Rio Indio and who have a very poor attitude in their working relationship with the people. First, rural areas like Rio Indio are considered to be depressive and these "urbanites" get desperate and anxious to leave as soon as they arrive. The people soon detect this attitude and feel that these individuals do not care for the work in which they are engaged. I have personally witnessed school teachers and medical doctors openly tell the people that they are lazy and ignorant. Many school teachers remain isolated from the people, forming little cliques of their own.

Undoubtedly, it is this attitude that reinforces the migratory trend towards the cities, even to such cities as Colón. For many people at Rio Indio, both the coastal and the upriver people, Colón is the urban site to which they aspire to go to high school, work, and live.

If programs are to be developed with any of the schools at Rio Indio, particularly the intermediate high school at the mouth of the river, a special effort will have to be made to develop a more effective attitude and better training of the teachers. Also, there is the problem that the maintenance and care of demonstration plots is often relegated to manual laborers, and the students do very little practical training on their own, including the sale of products cultivated in school plots or animals raised in school farms.

With U. S. personnel, I particularly caution against such "slips of tongue" and attitudes that because there is protein deficiency, undernourishment and malnutrition in Latin America, the mental capacity of the people is limited. People particularly resent this approach to nutritional programs. Their knowledge of natural systems, their enormous talent in ways of informal education and training, their gift of speech, their retentive memories, their amazing powers of observation are often not seen nor appreciated by outsiders who consider them to be mentally inferior.

Copies of the comments were mailed to the Chief of the Human Resource Section of USAID, the Dean of the School of Agronomy of the University of Panamá, and the Rector of the Catholic University Santa María la Antigua.

Panamá City

Thursday, March 8, 1979

A meeting was held at the School of Agronomy to review the questionnaire from the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy. Attending were two female sociologists from the Ministry, three students, two junior faculty, and the anthropologist. The senior faculty member who was coordinating the project and had returned from Delaware sat briefly at the table but did not stay to revise the questionnaire. The Dean briefly came out of his office to state that he was in agreement with the questions.

From the few students and junior faculty attending the meeting, it appeared that the social hierarchy and division of labor at the School of Agronomy was such that the work of administering questionnaires was passed on to a few students and junior faculty, with limited participation from the principal investigators or directors of the project in this aspect of the research.

It appeared that the sociologists did not have any statistically based sampling methodology for the number of questionnaires that would be administered, nor in which settlements. The number of people to be tested

would depend on the number of students who could be recruited to make the trip to Rio Indio, and the number of days that they might be able to stay at Rio Indio. At the time of this meeting, neither the sociologist nor the personnel from the School of Agronomy knew when they would be able to conduct the survey.

The anthropologist later found out that the questionnaires were administered the last week in March. A verbal message was sent to the anthropologist to Boca de Uracillo, via one of the motorboat operators, but it was received too late to have made arrangements to have gone downriver for this. It was also found out that only a few questionnaires were administered, mostly in the *Playero* settlements of Boca de Rio Indio and Gobeia.

When the anthropologist later met the sociologist to find out about the results of the questionnaires, the matter was still inconclusive. The sociologist had turned the questionnaires over to the office of Regional Planning in Colón, as she was transferred to another project and could not continue with the Rio Indio project. When an inquiry was made at the office of Regional Planning in Colón, no one there seemed to know what had happened to the questionnaires, or if any results had been analyzed. The School of Agronomy did not know either.

Panamá City

Wednesday, May 30, 1979

The anthropologist went to the USAID mission to inquire about the Rio Indio project, as a school teacher at Boca de Uracillo had said that one of his friends who was a student of agronomy was going to be appointed with a monthly salary, higher than that of the school teacher, to work in

the Rio Indio project.

The USAID mission had by that time received a Project Identification Document in English from the National Association of Partners of the Americas (Fletcher, NAPA:1979). A proposal in Spanish from the University of Panamá had also been received (Universidad de Panamá/Universidad de Delaware 1979). The Agricultural Section of USAID gave copies of these documents to the anthropologist and expressed an interest in her comments.

The Project Identification Document from the National Association of Partners of the Americas was very general in content. The proposal from the University of Panamá was more specific about the programs that were being proposed, as follows:

Institutional Strengthening of the University of Panamá
in Academic and Research Aspects

Agreement between the University of Panamá (UP) and the University of Delaware (UDEL) sponsored by USAID:

Objectives

- 1 Establish a joint program UP-UDEL of socio-economic development in the communities of the Rio Indio, province of Colón.
- 2 Establish a program of mutual assistance in the areas of training and research with the purpose of institutional strengthening at the University of Panamá beginning with specific areas which are: agronomy, marine biology, and conservation of energy.

Philosophy of the Project

From the mutual cooperation between both institutions and with the sponsorship of USAID, the technical level of professors and students in both universities can be raised, and a viable project can be carried out, as well as the correct application of modern technology, to result in tangible socio-economic benefits for contemporary marginal populations.

Objective 1

The project of socio-economic development in the communities of the Rio Indio, province of Colón.

Goals:

- a. Increase the per capita income of the residents in the communities of the drainage of the Rio Indio, through production programs that apply modern and functional techniques.
- b. Reduce the index of malnutrition in these communities through the production and consumption of products during the 365 days of the year.
- c. Eradicate the ailments and illnesses endemic in the region through a systematic and continuous prophylaxis.

Programs at Rio Indio

A. Programs of Production and Marketing

1. Establish 200 dispersed hectares in coffee of the *Caturra* type with a shade of plantains.
2. Establish the production of milk both from cows and goats through the combination of grasses and legumes.
3. Establish the production of small species like rabbits, ducks, pigs, using the concept of feeding them on the basis of forage.
4. Home gardens, in combination with trees and vegetables, to supply the basic food needs of the communities.
5. The production of animals in the project to be later raised and commercialized by the inhabitants in the region.

B. Demonstration Plots

1. Nurseries of fruits and energetic plants.
2. Interspersed cultigens with and without irrigation.
3. Production of water buffalo -- 2 bulls and 10 cows.
4. Production of goats -- 2 males and 10 females.
5. Small parcels for the commercial evaluation of different fruits that are adaptable to the region with and without irrigation.

Programs of Mutual Assistance

1. Establish a training program at the Master's and Doctoral levels for the academic Ph.D. to strengthen the faculty of the University.
2. Short recycling programs of the faculty to update the professors in specific fields.
3. Exchange of professors.

4. Exchange of students.

5. Short visits to the production centers.

6. Establish a program for the conservation of the Summit Gardens to parallel the Longwood Gardens in Delaware.

Contributions by the University of Panamá

Executive Office (Personnel)

Director	US\$2,000/month	US\$24,000.00
Bilingual Secretary (Spanish-English)	550/month	6,600.00

Field Office (Personnel)

1 Manager-Accountant	400/mo.	4,800.00
3 Agricultural Engineers		
1 Agri. Eng. with experience	700/mo.	8,400.00
2 Agri. Eng. recently graduated	400/mo.	9,600.00
1 Mechanic-Welder	400/mo.	4,800.00

Personnel from the Area

6 Field Assistants	100 ea./mo.	600	7,200.00
1 Mechanical Assistant	100		1,200.00
1 Warehouse Man	100		1,200.00
1 Cook	70		910.00
1 Janitor	60		780.00
1 Washing-Ironing Woman	60		780.00
1 Office Assistant	100		1,200.00

Total for Personnel 71,470.00

Real Contributions

<u>Executive Office</u>	<u>Paid</u>	<u>Additional</u>	<u>Total</u>
Director	13,800	10,140	24,000.00
Bilingual Secretary	4,200	2,400	6,600.00

<u>Field Office</u>			
Manager-Accountant		4,800	4,800.00
Agri. Eng. with experience	6,600	1,800	8,400.00
2 Agri. Eng. without experience		9,600	9,600.00
Mechanic-Welder		4,800	4,800.00

<u>Area Personnel</u>			
6 Field Assistants		7,200	7,200.00
1 Mechanical Assistant		1,200	1,200.00
1 Warehouse Man		1,200	1,200.00
1 Cook		910	910.00
1 Janitor		780	780.00
1 Washing-Ironing Woman		780	780.00
	TOTAL 24,660	46,810	71,470.00

Other Contributions

Office Locale	2,400.00
Light, Telephone, etc.	2,400.00
(Universidad de Panamá/Universidad de Delaware 1979; translation mine.)	

ColónThursday, May 31, 1979

The anthropologist only submitted written comments on the proposal from the universities and not on the Project Identification Document from the National Association of Partners of the Americas. The comments were written in a memorandum to the USAID/Panamá team evaluating the Rio Indio project. Copies of the memorandum were mailed to the Dean of the School of Agronomy and to the Fellowship Coordinator of the Inter-American Foundation. The comments were as follows:

Outright, I wish to state:

1. That I agree that the students and professors of the Universidad de Panamá need strengthening of their academic and applied programs. Specifically, this should mean more field research under actual conditions in rural areas, and direct incorporation of research findings into the non-academic community in the area where the research is carried out.
2. That the "correct application of modern technology" must take into account the traditional systems of production and marketing, and on that basis then bridge the gap between the traditional and the modern. Changes cannot be wrought if traditional socio-cultural concepts and practices are disregarded.

Programs for Rio IndioA. Programs of Production and Marketing:

In general, the economic history of Rio Indio, as reconstructed from oral history, reveals that the coastal and upriver populations at Rio Indio have actively participated in the production and marketing of cash crops for national and international markets (see rough draft of article "Scheduling Cash at Rio Indio"). Both *Playeros* and *Naturales* at Rio Indio have been receptive to new inputs for cash production, as long as they could maintain a varied household production

for use and exchange. In all the cases of a cash product, the buyer or intermediary was the key person in disseminating information and creating a demand; therefore, the project should not overlook the important role of these buyers, who include retail store owners throughout the river system plus buyers from formal and informal marketing networks who come to the mouth of the Rio Indio every Thursday morning to buy products.

1. Coffee

a. Since both the *Playeros* and the upriver *Naturales* at Rio Indio cultivate coffee at present as a cash crop, the 200 hectares to be planted in *Caturra* under banana shade should include sites on both the coastal and upriver micro-zone under ecological conditions similar to those where people presently have their coffee planted. The agronomists should determine what are the limitations in each micro-zone to compensate for or remedy the limitations of each zone.

b. There have been previous experiments with *Caturra* up the Rio Indio; namely, at Boca de Uracillo in 1958, and are remembered well by the people. Memories of past experiments must be counteracted, or an explanation made to the people as to why the failure occurred in the past. In this previous *Caturra* case, the people considered it a disadvantage that the fruit matured at the height of the rainy season, and that the seeds did not remain attached to the branches but fell to the ground.

c. Members of the *Cooperativa Luz Campesina*, who are essentially coffee producers, should be incorporated into this experiment. The cooperative is one of the principal buyers of coffee. The members could very well benefit from technical advice, and could assist in disseminating information.

d. Other coffee buyers, particularly the owners of retail stores and the operators of shelling (depulping) machines who also act as buying agents, should be made aware that there is a demand for this *Caturra* variety for freeze-dried processes or whatever the reason. These people can be very instrumental in creating the demand and transmitting the information to the producers.

2. Cow and Goat Milk

a. The predominant type of cattle at Rio Indio at present is the Brama (*Cebú*) type, which is essentially produced for beef. The cows are only milked when calves are born. In most cases, the breeding of calves coincides with the dry season (January-April). After the calf is born, mother and offspring are brought from the pastures and kept near at home. The cow is milked early every morning for about one month while the calf is lactating. This milk is used not only for human

consumption, but also to bottle- and gourd-feed baby pigs, a task that is done by women and children. The worst problem that I have observed is the injury to the tits of the cow by contact with barbed wire around the house.

b. A variety of cattle that produces milk year-round should be sought, preferably a variety that is suitable both for milk as well as for beef. In 1978, the Delaware team suggested that a Jamaican variety was good for milk and beef production. As far as I have been able to determine, there is one family at El Chilar of Rio Indio that had a Jamaican bull. This family should be contacted for their experience with this Jamaican variety.

c. The cows of the project should be visible in pastures along the river banks. People travelling up and down the river are constantly making observations on the conditions of the cattle that they see along the river banks. Word should be spread among motorboat operators that the cows at such a site along the river bank belong to the project for milk production, and that people are welcomed to see the animals and the milking operation.

d. If milk production is encouraged, the program should likewise include methods for processing the milk in household or cottage industries. Techniques for making cheese are not currently practiced. The milk is only boiled, or it is allowed to go sour as buttermilk. The latter is used principally in making corn porridges (*pesad*) with sugar cane syrup, which is a traditional food for Holy Week. Milk candies (*bocadillos*) are also made with sugar or sugar cane syrup.

e. As far as I understand, goats are too destructive of vegetation. In Panamá we already have enough problems with soil erosion from other malpractices, to encourage raising an animal that even eats the roots of plants.

3. Small Animals

a. In the majority of the households, both on the coast and upriver, women and children (ages 8 to 12) are in charge of raising, feeding, curing, and caring for small animals; namely, chickens, ducks, turkeys, and pigs. Therefore, any program with small animals should include women and children as direct recipients of advice or instructions. As one woman told me, the work of women in production is not seen because it is in the house, while the men are "outside" and are seen.

b. Ordinarily, these small animals are fed in the immediate vicinity of the house, several times throughout the day, a diet of rice, corn, coconuts, manioc, leftovers, and milk in the case of baby pigs. However, the animals are allowed to scavenge around. This practice of scavenging is rationalized by the following:

1. The concept of "freedom" of the animals.
2. That the meat of the animals tastes better if allowed to scavenge.
3. That yard animals (*crtas de patio*), particularly fowl, command a higher price in the formal and informal marketing systems. This is particularly true during the November and December holidays, when there is a demand in the cities for traditional holiday foods.
4. That there is not enough water available to wash pens if the animals were penned in.

Even the chicken farm at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio, donated by the Rotary Club of Colón, and the chickens and pigs of the Ciclo Básico at Boca de Rio Indio, were allowed to scavenge (creating all sorts of problems because of their numbers), on the basis of the above rationalizations. In both cases the programs were discontinued.

c. Before experimenting with a new animal like rabbits that are known to be susceptible to various diseases and climatological conditions, why not reinforce what there already is being produced in the area—chickens, ducks, turkeys, and pigs. Even experiments in domesticating animals that are used in "garden hunting" would be more advisable. These are animals that have developed a symbiotic relationship with slash-and-burn agricultural practices, living in the *montes* (agricultural work sites) or in *rastrojales* (fallow plots undergoing regenerative secondary growth). It would be a great contribution to the science of tropical agriculture if the agronomists could develop a system combining animal and agricultural production with these animals, similar to fish farming in regions of wet rice cultivation. These animals that are "garden hunted" include the *agouti* (*Cuniculus paca*), the white-tailed deer (*Mazama*), the iguana, and fowl like the *tinamou* and the *chachalaca*.

This may seem farfetched, but in the dietary habits of the people at Rio Indio, these are preferred foods and rudimentary forms of domesticating wild animals are already practiced by the people. In Uracillo, there are three families who have experimented at domesticating deer, the *sinicuijo* (a rodent), and *patsana* (a bird). Wild animals under domestication are hidden from public view for fear of the "evil eye" and are always protected with a red ribbon around the neck, similar to the red ribbon around a baby's wrist for protection against the evil eye.

A program of farming *babillos* (a small alligator), similar to alligator farming in Florida, would even be advisable. There is already a high demand for *babillos* at Rio Indio, by a local taxidermist on the coast who pays \$1 per foot length of the animal, for his business with tourist shops in Colón. (Mr...

this would be a program that might be worked out with the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources in the Gatún Lake reforestation program.)

d. Although the proposal mentions marine biology on the front page, it was not elaborated into the program for Rio Indio. Two points in this regard are worth mentioning:

1. People up the Rio Indio are already practicing a rudimentary form of pisciculture. Some of the residents by deep pools along the river, who are conceptually regarded as the "owners" of those pools, during the dry season, when the water is clear, feed the *sábalo pipón* (*Brycon chagrensis*) the leaves of the *hinojo sabalero* (*Piper auritum*). This aromatic plant is allowed to grow in pastures as secondary growth and is not cut down because it is useful in fishing. (Parenthetically, neither is the *membrillo* (*Gustavia superba*) of the Brazilnut family *Lecythidaceae* nor the *lolá* or *palma real* cut because their fruits are used in feeding pigs and for fishing and their wood and leaves, respectively, used in house construction--another possibility for the Renewable Natural Resources project.)

The practice with the *hinojo sabalero* includes both the use of traps for fish and spear-fishing, after the fish have been accustomed to eating the *hinojo* regularly at the pool. People also like the flavor acquired by the *sábalo* after it has eaten the *hinojo*. The laboratories of the School of Agronomy should be encouraged to do tests with this plant, to see what are the nutritive or aromatic chemicals involved.

2. Marine fishing, including turtle fishing, are highly valued by the coastal people, and the upriver people like to buy marine fish from the coastal people when they go down the river on marketing days. A program in marine fishing techniques and methods should definitely be encouraged.

4. Huertos Caseros

- a. *Huertos caseros* (household plots) are strongly recommended, more so than *parcelas demostrativas* or *huertos comunitarios* (demonstration or community plots). It is necessary that academically trained agronomists be more aware of what are the economic and social aspects of "household production" as the primary unit of production in Rio Indio. To periodically advise and check as many as 40 or 50 families along the coast and upriver is not an unreasonable task for an agronomist. It can be done if the agronomists are willing to "live" for prolonged periods in the settlements and not just make quick, rush-rush visits of one or two days to the area. Confidence in the agronomists will only occur if they are willing to live under the conditions in which the people themselves live. People will very easily and quickly detect if a person feels at ease among them (*se siente tranquila*), without making

derogatory verbal and facial expressions as to the living conditions in the area, or longing for city life. The attitude of the agronomists will bear a direct relationship to the success or failure of the program.

b. Preferably, *huertos caseros* should be done with families that have a history of successfully and consistently trying out new methods and techniques, and sharing with others their experiences. There are several such families recognized by the people themselves.

c. Families of current and former students at the Ciclo Básico at Boca de Rio Indio should be incorporated into the program of *huertos caseros*. The general pattern that I have observed, particularly with the upriver people, is to send the third and fourth children for formal education. Oldest first and second children, particularly sons, are retained at home for informal, practical training in production and marketing. The parents and older children are key factors in administrative decisions of production, but are nevertheless receptive to information obtained through the younger ones receiving formal education. Such a program of *huertos caseros* with the families of students would bridge the gap between formal and informal training.

5. Animals Used in the Project

a. Animals used in the project should be sold on credit, or raffled, among local residents who worked directly in the project and were well aware of the techniques and methods used in raising them. Again, a program through the families of the students at the Ciclo Básico would be advisable, making students and their families directly involved from the beginning of the project. USAID has already spent almost half a million dollars in renovating the Ciclo Básico at Boca de Rio Indio. A school, however, is not just the building but the programs practiced by the personnel imparting and receiving instructions. Therefore, any program to bolster up participation of professors, students, alumni, and families of students and alumni would better justify the use of the new buildings and facilities.

b. Local residents who are *negociantes* or *compradores* (business people or buyers) of animals, should be made aware from the beginning of the animals and techniques used in the project. These people should be incorporated in the marketing or distribution of these animals.

B. Demonstration Plots

a. Demonstration plots should be coordinated with the Ciclo Básico for the same reasons given in A5a.

b. The sites of the plots should be located in both the

coastal and upriver micro-zones, for the same reasons given in Ala.

c. Same comments given in A2e apply here in regards to goats.

d. People have verbally expressed to myself and to the missionaries working with the coop, that they would like to better the production of their coconut palms and citrus trees, which have been affected by pests. The palms have the *broma torito* (a beetle), and the orange and lemon trees have ants at the foot of the trunk and moss and epiphytes on the branches that the people consider are reducing the production. Any program in solving these problems would be greatly welcomed.

e. If only the field assistants who will work in the demonstration plots will be the people receiving direct experience and training, measures should be taken to include the participation of others; e.g., students of the Ciclo Básico.

Budget

a. The figures quoted appear to be only for a period of one year. Plants and animals take time to grow and involve a cycle of at least five years to evaluate their growth and production. Therefore, the budget should be extended for at least a five year period.

b. Students who have graduated from the Ciclo Básico should be employed as field assistants. There was the problem in 1978 that the three students in the 6th year of agricultural high school training were not given credit for completion of the program. These three students should be given the opportunity for working as field assistants and some certificate or credit given for their training in the project.

c. Salaries for local residents should be equivalent to salaries now paid by the Ministry of Education for field assistants, cooks, and manual laborers at the Ciclo Básico.

d. A cautionary note is in order: Local politicians will undoubtedly try to exercise control over who is hired for the project. Traditionally, bureaucratic employment has been controlled by the coastal people due to their greater geographical accessibility. A balance should be maintained in employing both coastal and upriver people, as the area should be looked upon as a region where there has traditionally been interdependence and interrelationships between those on the coast and those upriver, even though at times there has also been conflict between both groups.

e. If "institutional strengthening" means that the project director should receive an increase in salary in order

to retain his or her services as a professor in the university, then this increase may be warranted as local newspapers and bulletin boards at the School of Agronomy voice the complaint that the professors are moving out to work with other institutions where they are better remunerated.

f. Again, if "institutional strengthening" means that the agronomist with one year experience and the two without experience are alumni of the School of Agronomy and are currently unemployed, then their salaries are warranted. Their experiments or experience in the project, however, should be worked out as a *research* for a graduate program towards a Master's or Ph.D. degree with the University of Delaware. A Master's thesis or dissertation for the Ph.D. should be one of the results of the project. These agronomists should be encouraged to write up the results of the project in the form of a thesis or dissertation, not only for future consultation by others who wish to share in their learning experience, but also to ensure a systematic and controlled focus on the project.

g. It would be advisable to employ a female agronomist to work with the female aspects of production of small animals.

A response to the foregoing comments was received on September 13, 1979, and will be quoted for that date.

Colón and Panamá City

Thursday, July 5, 1979

Upon collecting her mail in Colón, the anthropologist found a letter and a telephone message from the senior professor of the School of Agronomy who was coordinating the Rio Indio project. He announced that a Delaware team would arrive at Rio Indio on July 12, and that they would appreciate it if the anthropologist met them at the mouth of the river on that day. Upon calling the Dean's office to acknowledge receipt of the notice, he stated that they were not sure at what time they would arrive at Rio Indio as this was contingent upon getting a helicopter ride from the National Guard. Nevertheless, he wanted the anthropologist to have food ready for the Delaware team when they arrived.

The anthropologist then stated that they might as well land at Santa Rosa first where she was located at that time since they were travelling by helicopter. If she was going to be preparing food for the visitors, she wanted to help the women with this task and not simply tell them to do it as if they were servants. Also, the cost of the food and the time of the women should be covered. The Dean agreed over the phone to do this and that he would acknowledge a bill later.

The President of the Panamá Committee of the Partners of the Americas was having a reception party for the Delaware team that night at her house, and the Dean wanted the anthropologist to attend in order to meet the members of the team. At the party, one of the members of the team requested that the anthropologist show the Rio Indio area to a food preservation specialist who was interested in the preservation of fish. The food preservation specialist was from Bangladesh and had demonstrated at the University of Delaware to be a very practical oriented researcher. Should a fish project be undertaken with the coastal people, preservation of fish for marketing would be part of the project.

Santa Rosa de Rio Indio

Thursday, July 12, 1979

The Delaware team never showed up at Santa Rosa. People had their ears tuned for the sound of any helicopter. By four o'clock in the afternoon, which is the regular eating time for people, the food was distributed among the women who had prepared it to take to their households. The anthropologist felt embarrassed, but the people were so gracious that they said that at least they would have plenty of chicken soup and rice for themselves. The waiting time had not been entirely wasted for the anthro-

pologist, as the people began to make comments about the numerous times in the past that politicians and government bureaucrats had promised to visit them and never showed up. From this perspective, the apathy and frustrations of the country people for certain programs were better understood by the anthropologist.

Panamá City

Tuesday, August 12, 1979

On a visit to Panamá City, the anthropologist called the Dean's office to request payment for the food and the time of the women in Santa Rosa. Although the Dean could not remember that he had made such a request, he finally acknowledged the bill. He stated that they had not been able to get the helicopter, and had later in the day decided to drive to Rio Indio but it was too late to get as far up the river as Santa Rosa, and had only gotten as far as Quebrada Bonita where they met with extension agents of the Ministry of Agricultural Development who were also visiting this site in the lower reaches of the river.

Officers of USAID in Panamá City who had accompanied the Delaware team to Rio Indio were unaware of the arrangements that the Dean had made to feed the team when they arrived at Rio Indio.

The Bangladesh food preservation specialist from the University of Delaware had arrived and called the anthropologist in Panamá City to coordinate a trip to Rio Indio. The anthropologist emphasized this time that no one would be left waiting like the previous time, and what this meant in terms of credibility with the people.

Boca de Rio Indio and Santa Rosa de Rio IndioThursday, August 16, 1979

The Bangladesh food preservation specialist from the University of Delaware, the senior faculty member from the School of Agronomy who was coordinating the project, and a member of the Agricultural Section of USAID arrived at Rio Indio. The *Playero Corregidor* accompanied them on a tour of the Production School facilities. The anthropologist insisted that the agricultural plots and cattle pastures of the school also be visited so that the professor of agronomy would have an idea of the type of ecological setting in which these were located on a sea cliff. This meant walking further inland and away from the school buildings, and was done.

The professor of agronomy, nevertheless, stressed how much more important were the new buildings and facilities to house personnel, as the logistics of the living conditions would be crucial in contributing to the well-being of the students and the professors participating in the project and in relation to their attitudes. In other words, comfort was more important than anything else. His concern for comfort was also reflected by other types of behavior during the visit. The professor would not assist in pushing the dugout canoe that was aground in the sand, when the anthropologist indicated that it was customary for passengers to assist in this regard when taking off. At Santa Rosa he would not walk inland to observe the experimental coffee grove of the *Asentamiento Campesino* where the variety of coffee that had been recommended in the proposal had already been planted two years before by extension agents from the Ministry of Agriculture. The anthropologist had suggested this so that they would have an idea of how the plants were doing. His excuse was that

he had heart problems and could not climb hills.

The speech of this professor was classified by the people of Rio Indio, both *Playeros* and *Naturales*, as a *barajeo* (card shuffling), which they say is characteristic of politicians who are trying to win people over to their side. The speech of the Dean was also classified as a *barajeo*, as the day he visited Santa Rosa in January he had promised the people at Santa Rosa an inland road.

The Bangladesh food preservation specialist was appalled at what he considered to be "very primitive" living conditions and food preservation techniques like smoking. He took photographs of the smoking process, as his technological knowledge dealt more with the preservation of food through chemical additives and refrigeration. Although the rural setting appeared to recall memories from his childhood experiences in Bangladesh, he honestly admitted that he had become acculturated to urban life in the United States and would find it very difficult to work in a rural setting like that of Rio Indio.

The USAID personnel were particularly interested in the large amount of capital investment in machinery that had been done by the cooperative of coffee growers, and how well kept the machinery was compared to other capital investments that they had seen in other rural areas on the Pacific side of Panamá.

One of the USAID men was particularly interested in having written comments made later by the residents of Santa Rosa who had attended the speech event in which the faculty member of the School of Agronomy had explained the plans for the project. He suggested to the people to make their own proposal about what they wanted. Unfortunately, the people later hesitated to do this in writing when the anthropologist reminded

them of what had been suggested. In the past, the *principales* of Santa Rosa have negotiated what they want on an oral basis, and it is unfortunate that the USAID man insisted on written comments. In a nation like the United States where verbal testimony before congressional hearings is taken into account in processes of evaluation, in spite of the high literacy rate in the United States, it would be advisable that the voice of people in rural areas also be given its proper value without insisting on written proposals. Taperecording and transcriptions of recordings might be a better way of dealing with proposals from country people for whom the oral tradition is much more natural than writing.

Panamá City

September 13, 1979

The following letter bearing the above date was received by the anthropologist from the USAID officer in charge of the Office of Development Resources:

Dear Ms. Joly:

I wish to offer belated personal thanks for the memorandum on the Rio Indio Project which you did at my request. The memorandum, which was done on such short notice, is remarkably complete and perceptive. It has been and will continue to be very useful to both the Facultad and to AID during the design of the project.

In addition, the assistance which you have provided to the Facultad and AID personnel involved in the project design process has been most valuable.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you not only to continue to provide this very helpful assistance while you do your field work in Rio Indio, but also, when your doctoral dissertation is completed, to discuss with Mission personnel possible long and/or short term requirements for cultural anthropologists in projects being financed by AID. I am aware of two projects that are currently being implemented in which your services could be extremely useful.

Good luck on your dissertation.

Sincerely,

Office of Development
Resources

Panamá City

January 15, 1980

The Bangladesh food preservation specialist from Delaware arrived in Panamá to make the arrangements for a food preservation training program that the University of Panamá would operate at the branch of the University in the Pacific side town of Penonomé, Coclé province. He would return to Panamá later in the year, on a sabbatical from the University of Delaware, to start this training program. Easy accessibility by the Pan-American Highway from Panamá City to Penonomé in a couple of hours was a factor taken into account for locating this program in Penonomé and yet allow the faculty to reside in Panamá City.

The Bangladesh man had planned to have been in Panamá in November of 1979, but had to postpone his trip until January 1980 because he had to attend the hearings to obtain his United States citizenship.

Panamá City

January 22, 1979

An Italian aquaculture specialist from the University of Delaware arrived in Panamá to make the arrangements for his return in June to Panamá as an exchange professor in aquaculture at the branch of the University of Panamá in the Pacific side town of Santiago, Veraguas province. The Bangladesh food preservation specialist had asked the anthropologist to

accompany the Italian aquaculture specialist to Santiago. Since the anthropologist was interested herself in knowing more about the aquaculture program which had also been proposed for Rio Indio, she drove the car that she and the Italian aquaculture specialist rented to go to Santiago.

The Director of the Aquaculture Program of the Ministry of Agricultural Development of Panamá gave a slide presentation and an informal talk to the Italian aquaculture specialist from Delaware and to the anthropologist. Also visiting was an aquaculture specialist from the University of Auburn in the United States. The Director of the Aquaculture Program was also expecting a United States anthropologist that the USAID office had notified him would be arriving to evaluate the program. The Director honestly confessed that he could not understand why so many different people from different universities in the United States had to be constantly evaluating the program, and it seemed to him that they often did not stay long enough to really know what was being done.

The Italian aquaculture specialist and the anthropologist went to a rural community near Santiago to observe and participate in a fish harvest at an aquaculture pool. Although the aquaculture program included technical assistance for 110 rural communities in building aquaculture tanks and supplying them with fish, most of the students in the 2-year training program at Santiago were being trained to work as technicians in the *Compañía Agromarina de Panamá, S. A.*, a subsidiary of Ralston Purina of the United States, and the *Compañía Palangosta*. These large-scale shrimp farms are located at Aguadulce, a site on the Pacific Coclé province. Students would also be employed by the *Compañía Camarones de Panamá*, located at Bique Beach, Panamá province. These companies began operations in Panamá in 1975 (Pretto 1978:13-14), and their main commercial operation is based on the

exportation of shrimp to the United States and Europe, and to sell to restaurants in the urban transisthmian center of Panamá.

Panamá City

April 2, 1980

Although the anthropologist had returned to the University of Florida in March after having completed her field work, she returned to Panamá the first week in April to attend the Symposium on Botany and Natural History that was sponsored by the University of Panamá and the Missouri Botanical Garden. She was presenting a paper on the use of *Piper auritum* to fish and trap fish by the *Naturales* of Rio Indio (July n.d.).

During the visit, the anthropologist found out that the Dean of the School of Agronomy of the University of Panamá had been selected for the position of Ecological Manager for the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panamá, to manage the forest reserves of this institution which are located in areas previously administered by the United States in the former Canal Zone and which were transferred to Panamanian jurisdiction with the 1977 Torrijos-Carter Treaty.

The anthropologist also found out that the senior agronomy professor who had been coordinating the proposal for Rio Indio was promoted to agricultural advisor to the Rector of the University of Panamá.

Moreover, the School of Agronomy had been transferred to the branch of the University of Panamá in the Pacific town of David, Chiriquí province. This province is regarded in Panamá and the United States as the most productive agriculturally because of its rich volcanic soils and because many large-scale agricultural commercial operations are located there. However, neither the Dean of the School of Agronomy nor the senior professor of agronomy had wanted to move from Panamá City to Chiriquí.

Their new positions represented salary increases. A 73 per cent salary increase for the director of the Rio Indio project was one of the items in the proposal that had been submitted by the University of Panamá.

A USAID officer stated that isolated, low-density rural areas like Rio Indio might not be the best locations for development programs, as there was greater demand to assist the larger populations in urban centers. No one knew if the Rio Indio project would go through or not.

Inferences

From the foregoing sequence of events, the following inferences can be made:

1. That the transisthmian urban center, particularly Panamá City, and the Pacific side of Panamá continue to be the major areas that dominate the socio-economy of the Isthmus through their participation in the international export trade.

2. That the General Provisions (Sec. 296) of Title XII--Famine Prevention and Freedom from Hunger, of the "International Development and Food Assistance Act, Public Law 94-161, 94th Congress of the United States of America, December 20, 1975, have been interpreted to apply to feeding urban restaurant food consumers in Panamá, the United States, and Europe rather than to increase the food production of small farmers in rural areas.

3. That institutional problems, in this case the relocation of the School of Agronomy of the University of Panamá from Panamá City to David, "are used to an advantage by administrators and policy makers who act as intermediaries between the...systems. The skill that these cultural brokers develop to manage such events is important in legitimizing

their status at the local level" (Burns 1980b:139). As in the case reported by Burns (*ibid.*:135) for rural education in the United States in the 1970s, the administrators faced the crisis of having an added supply of money available to them rather than too little money.

4. That the Rio Indio proposal was only a front to obtain funds for personnel of the School of Agronomy.

5. That the rural people know that status seekers try to manipulate them. Therefore, the rural people do not really believe all the promises made for improving their socio-economic conditions. Nevertheless, they play along the game as in the process they may have an opportunity to capture or recover for themselves in their rural setting some of the economic resources that are centralized elsewhere.

6. That the advocacy role of the applied anthropologist in favor of the "targeted beneficiaries" is not taken seriously and disregarded, perhaps because in this case it was a voluntary service, but more likely because of more powerful forces in national and international political economies and their apparent blindness for the needs of those who have no power and no voice in the development game.

7. That foreign immigrants in academic professions in the United States may have to validate their right to United States citizenship by being assigned for prolonged periods to serve in areas that are considered politically sensitive and potentially hazardous.

8. That the fact that some of these professional immigrants to the United States were born and raised in rural areas of other countries of the world, does not mean that they are willing to regress to work under similar conditions that strike "too close to home."

General Implications of Development from Below
for Development from Above

In spite of their own efforts and accomplishments through their own systems of "development from below," the peoples of the Lower Coast may be regarded as part of the "poor hidden majority of Panamá" (Bartell 1980) when compared and contrasted with the wealth of international traders in the urban transisthmian center who are backed by a political-economy that favors them largely (Bartell 1980). Although certain aspects of poverty may appear to unite this majority, it is not a homogenous group. The *Naturales*, the *Playeros*, and the migrant *Interioranos* have different historical ethnic identities and each group has responded differently to internal and external factors in their human-ecological settings.

Therefore, development plans from "above" for the Lower Coast must take into account these differences and the potential conflicts and contradictions that they may generate. For example, the higher political status of the *Playeros* will mean that the increase in municipal taxes that has been recommended by the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy to reduce dependency on the central government will most likely benefit more the *Playero pueblos* than the settlements of the inland *Naturales*. So-called "improvements" like a plastic piping aqueduct at the nucleus controlled by the *principales* of the *Naturales* do not necessarily benefit all the households that support that nucleus and that are dispersed in living and work sites away from the nucleus of community symbols. Another conflict arises with the bank loans for increasing extensive cattle production among the *Interioranos*, and the other groups as well, as this leads to constriction of the amount of land available for swidden agriculture.

These conflicts and contradictions will be undoubtedly magnified by the expansion of the central government through such development plans from "above" as the construction of a sea level canal through this region. The peoples of the Lower Coast, therefore, need to be made aware not so much of their "poor" and "dependent" situation, but of their own worth and dignity in terms of their power to negotiate their status, honor, and position, even if at times such an effort may appear to be a fiction. This may well be done by reinforcing their power of speech, of teaching them the language of "developers from above" so that they, too, can "shuffle their cards" in the same way that they have seen status seekers "from above" use development planning for their own advantage.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

The major contribution of this dissertation is the evaluation of the development process in its two major dimensions; namely, planning for "development from above" by bureaucratic systems and the "development from below" of indigenous socio-cultural systems. In this evaluation, the following theoretical formulations served as an operational mode or a guiding methodology: regional analysis, community study, event analysis, sociolinguistics, ethnohistory, ritual and symbolism, human ecology, and development. The focus, however, was not that of ethnographic detail presented in a simply descriptive manner and serving only to exemplify theories as is the case in contemporary circles in academic anthropology. Instead, in the foregoing chapters, the indigenous systems of "development from below" of the *Naturales*, the *Playeros*, and the *Interioranos*, as well as the case of development planning "from above" by the University of Panamá, the University of Delaware, and the United States Agency for International Development, were described in full ethnographic detail to correct the simplistic view given in feasibility studies for development plans in regards to the human groups in the Lower Coast.

For example, the feasibility study commissioned by the National Bank of Panamá and the World Bank for the development of cattle production in the Atlantic sector (Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977), lists the human groups as a "resource," but there is no indication whatsoever of why or how the human groups are a resource other than that they represent a

demographic factor displaying certain characteristics with regard to natural growth, mortality, density, health, sanitation, and education. The following description of the human resources in their Zone 3, which covers the area between the rivers Indio and Coclé del Norte, illustrates this reductionist method of treating the identity and capabilities of the people:

Zone 3 has great unpopulated extensions, particularly in its western part. Along the littoral, from the mouth of the Rio Indio to the Coclé del Norte, the predominant population is that of colonial blacks, and inland in the continental part, there are small and dispersed populated sites of Hispanic-Indigenous people, dedicated to subsistence agriculture. The presence of the latter group is possibly due to immigration from the Coclé province in search of better lands (Banco Nacional-Banco Mundial 1977:67; translation mine).

What can possibly be inferred from this type of description of the "human resources" of Zone 3? Not much, other than the fact that the "colonial blacks" (the *Playeros*) live in the littoral section and the "Hispanic-Indigenous people" (the *Naturales*) live in the inland, continental section. There is no idea at all of the socio-cultural values of these human groups, what they can offer to the development process in terms of their own ways of organizing themselves, of doing things, of responding to external and internal influences, trends, and conflicts.

Therefore, if feasibility studies are going to continue to be done through bibliographic and questionnaire surveys, it is absolutely essential to have detailed ethnographies that can at least serve as reference sources for such bibliographic surveys and to complement the questionnaire surveys.

The ethnographic detail in this dissertation seeks to convey a sense of the worth of the human groups in the Lower Coast in terms of their own accomplishments, their own strategies in recovering or capturing for them-

selves part of those resources that have been historically centralized in the transisthmian urban center and the Pacific lowlands of the central and western provinces. It has not been the intention to portray "timeless 'traditional' cultural systems...as the antithesis of 'modernization' " (Forman and Riegelhaupt 1979:397). The community systems here described as types of development systems are part of the modernization process and must be incorporated "within the broader structure of resource dispersal within the national (or regional) political system" (*ibid.*), and the international system as well. The *principales* of the *Naturales*, the *pueblos* of the *Playeros*, and the migration of the *Interioranos* reflect their responses to economic and political forces operating in Panamá since the Spanish colonial period to the present.

The responses of these three human groups to political and economic forces shows that the region of the Lower Coast has been viewed and used differently by each of these groups at different periods in time. This indicates that the concept of regionalism is not a fixed entity in space and time, but is constantly changing. For example, at one point in time the mountainous zone of the Lower Coast may have been a region of refuge for the *Naturales* in the Coclé Reservation. The system of *principales*, however, reveals that the *Naturales* extended the boundaries of that inadjudicative tract of land by a hiving off process in establishing new settlements along the river banks. In this process, they adopted elements from the national culture (the store, the school, and the church) and incorporated them to a familistic production system for subsistence and marketing. Thus, they were not really isolated in a region of refuge but were very much part of the nation as a whole. In fact, they have been linked to the international world through their production of such export

crops as bananas and coffee.

The *Naturales*, nevertheless, have remained essentially dispersed in living and agricultural household sites that are located away from their nuclei of community symbols, that is, the store, the school, and the chapel. The *Playeros*, on the other hand, have nucleated their houses in their *pueblos* and have their agricultural work sites away from the *pueblo*. In their migration, the *Interioranos* have symbiotically used the facilities at the nuclei of the *Naturales* and the *pueblos* of the *Playeros*. These differences reveal that each group has a different community development system.

The systems of relations upon which these development system are based could not have been traced through time and space without the aid of sociolinguistics to discover the oral ethnohistories of each group. It is only through oral history that the event analysis of cash booms and busts was possible. Therefore, it is essential that the anthropologist engage in a social discourse or dialogue. In itself, this dialogue is a sociolinguistic event, and how different anthropologists from different speech communities engage in it will affect the data gathering process. Therefore, the sociolinguistics of fieldwork dialogues deserve to be studied further as speech events in themselves.

In terms of human ecology, the Lower Coast reveals different human ecological systems. For the *Naturales* and the *Playeros*, the waterways have been key elements in their community development systems. The tropical rain forest has been crucial for all three groups in their practice of swidden agriculture. Cattle raising, however, as intensified by the *Interioranos* is constricting the amount of forest and may eventually change the physiography and climate of the region. Each group must also take

into account the presence of the others in their systems of relations with each other and with the natural resources. The cash value of these resources has also been an important element, as in the case of the vegetable ivory nuts, rubber, chicle, and turtle shells. The infrastructures introduced by government agencies and missionaries must also be taken into account in the human ecological systems. Undoubtedly, the construction of highways will cause additional changes in the systems of human relations and the relations of the people with the natural resources. Thus, the ecosystem is a variable in itself, a function of modifications arising from human use and not a constant to which human groups adapt. Ecology, then, is just another variable in human socio-cultural systems.

It is the complexity of human socio-cultural systems that makes "development from above" a difficult process to reconcile with "development from below." The metaphoric imagery is that of gears that most of the time are out of phase. The bureaucratic development agencies from "above" are in themselves complex socio-cultural systems. It is questionable, therefore, whether an anthropologist, an economist, a regional planner, a sociologist, and agronomist, and engineer or any other professional can individually mediate between all the systems involved in the development process. Multidisciplinary approaches may be effective if there is cooperation and coordination among the members, but the case of the Title XII University of Panamá-University of Delaware-USAID planning process from "above" illustrates how difficult it is to coordinate different personnel from various bureaucratic institutions.

Multidisciplinary team work among professionals will not be effective either unless the "targets" or "beneficiaries" are incorporated also into the planning process. This cannot simply be done through questionnaires.

This requires the comprehension on the part of the professionals to learn from the "on-the-ground" living experiences of common men and women what they can offer to the development process in terms of both constraints and limitations as well as positive contributions. It also requires a personal moral commitment to be willing to work in areas that are not always as comfortable as the urban facilities of contemporary First World countries like the United States.

Undoubtedly, the development process is part and parcel of political and economic forces that have made up domination and dependency complexes on earth throughout human history. Within the constraints and limitations of dominion and dependency--or interdependency as some wish to see it--human groups need to be reassured of their own capabilities and potentialities so that they can better negotiate and protect their own position in terms of their own rights, status, and honor, even if at times such an effort may be futile and tragic.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE PRELIMINARY SURVEY

Why the Lower Coast?

To better understand the focus of this dissertation in the development processes among the human groups in the Caribbean Lower Coast of Panamá, one must first understand why I decided to carry on a social discourse with these peoples about their lives in this region. This is best achieved by describing the preliminary survey that led to the decision to do further research in this region.

This self revelation of my decision-making process does not arise out of narcissism, a need to be anecdotal, or a psychological hangup from primary and secondary schooling under Catholic, Swiss-Deutsche nuns who were strict disciplinarians. It is, instead, a genuine concern for "the ethical principles for conducting fieldwork" (Cassell 1980) and for "the cultural problem of the cultural anthropologist" (Hsu 1979). As a personal commitment, I consider that every anthropologist should make a self-evaluation when reporting the results of each fieldwork rather than divulging later, personally or through others, in an article, a biography, or a diary, the ethical dilemmas in fieldwork (Rynkiewicz and Spradley 1976; Patridge 1979). I support that exemplary "activist" anthropologist Laura Nader (1976:180) in urging that:

The first step in setting out the priorities in the discipline would be to encourage more explicit statements in meetings and in published works on why we have chosen to study something. Such a statement should include scientific and ethical reasons as well.

The Dilemma of Decision-Making

A three-month preliminary survey in Panamá in 1977 posed the dilemma of deciding where and with whom I should do the fieldwork. In the proposal applying for this survey grant from the Tropical South America Research Program of the University of Florida, I stated as the focus of interest the coconut trade among the San Blas *Cuna*. I had been in contact with the *Cuna* in various ways during ten years (1964-1974) of undergraduate, evening courses at the branch of The Florida State University in Panamá. In one of my first courses in anthropology at F. S. U., we were required to write a field manual for Peace Corps volunteers working among human groups in Panamá. For this, I selected the San Blas *Cuna*. I had been personally involved with Peace Corps females working in the San Blas Archipel-

ago and in Colón, the port city where I lived and had been born and which is the Atlantic terminal of the Panamá Canal. One of these Peace Corps friends had asked me to make arrangements for a group of *Cuna* school girls who were travelling from San Blas to Colón, to stay overnight at the recreation shed of Saint Mary's Academy in Colón. At that time, I was president of the Alumnae Association of Saint Mary's.

Subsequently, the F. S. U. Isthmian Anthropology Society, of which I was a charter member, organized a travelling exhibit of *Cuna molas*, shown in Panamá and Florida. Within the Board of Directors of F.S.U.I.A.S., I was involved for several years in promoting the sale of *About Molos/Hablando de Molos* (Angermuller and Chavez 1969). This bilingual booklet in English and Spanish had initially accompanied the *mola* exhibit and continued on sale by popular demand. The F.S.U.I.A.S. also organized field trips to visit the *Cuna* in San Blas and those in the Bayano river on the Pacific slope of Panamá.

During my last year at F. S. U. in 1974, I attended a course on *Cuna* language taught by a *Cuna* man who was a researcher with the Center of Anthropological Investigations of the University of Panamá. Later during the Master's program at the University of Florida, I expanded my knowledge on the *Cuna* language by means of a term paper on *Cuna* for a course on anthropological linguistics.

While attending F. S. U. at nighttime, I worked during the day as a reporting stenographer in hearings of marine accident investigations in the Panamá Canal (1964-1973). In one of the cases investigated, I was involved in the legal proceedings to assist the family of a *Cuna* deckhand who had died in an accident aboard a transiting ship. Also, at my job site in the Panamá Canal, *Cuna* men regularly plied *molos*, many of which ended in the F.S.U.I.A.S. exhibit. Becoming part of the trade network of one of these *Cuna* vendors led me into close relations with his kin network in San Blas and Colón.

Under the influence of these contacts with the *Cuna*, I was inclined to relate to the *Cuna* as an anthropologist and this determined my choice to survey the *Cuna* coconut trade. In doing the survey, moreover, there was the possibility of assisting and learning in the field from Dr. Alexander Moore, who at that time was one of the professors of anthropology at the University of Florida and had been awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation in 1977-78 to study the political process of consensus among the San Blas *Cuna*.

Nevertheless, I did not feel quite free to do "my thing" just because I was interested in the *Cuna*. I was aware that Panamanian anthropologists were employed as applied researchers with agencies that were undertaking development projects within a paradigm of priorities set by the government. Also, in Panamá, as in other Latin American countries, researchers are encouraged to investigate national issues and problems, in order to maximize limited human professional resources and work for the well-being of their own country. In a profession like anthropology this may limit the cross-cultural perspective. But if I wanted to validate my right to practice my profession in my own country, I decided that during the survey I better consult with personnel in institutions in Panamá to evaluate which areas and/or groups of people were considered more appropriate to work in/or with than the San Blas *Cuna* who had already been observed, analyzed, and reported by numerous national and international anthropologists.

Upon my arrival in Panamá in June 1977, therefore, I first consulted with persons in several institutions and whom I considered could give me sound advice. They would also know of socio-economic development plans and projects whereby I could evaluate processes of social change, since I had in mind then to apply to the Inter-American Foundation for a Latin American and Caribbean Learning Fellowship on Social Change. As it happens with others (McCurdy 1976:6), there is usually a foundation on which one zeroes in and for which the research proposal is really written. Of course, I was also submitting proposals to a few other institutions like the Smithsonian and Wenner Gren where as a non-U. S. citizen I could apply.

The Consultations

At the Directorate of Historical Patrimony of the National Institute of Culture that regulates anthropological research in Panamá, I consulted with Dra. Reina Torres de Araúz, the Director, and with Dra. Marcia Arosemena de Arosemena, Sub-Director and Chief of Scientific Investigations. Dra. Torres de Araúz is an anthropologist who has been interested, among other things, in the ethnohistory of the *Cuna* (Torres de Araúz 1974) and has worked with the mainland *Cuna* and the Chocó in Darién (Torres de Araúz 1975). She recommended to survey the *Cuna* in Paya and Púcuru. These *Cuna* villages in Darién are close to the Colombian border. Although isolated from the bulk of the *Cuna* population, and in the path of migrating Chocó (Waukana and Emberá) Indians and black frontiersmen from the Colombian Chocó, the people in Paya and Púcuru retain traits of *Cuna* culture. This was of theoretical interest to Dra. Torres de Araúz from the standpoint of *Cuna* ethnohistory. From the perspective of applied anthropology in social change, I also consulted the team of planners of the Ministry of Planning and Political Economy and the Organization of American States, who were working on the regional development of Darién. Their perspective focused on the future. These *Cuna* in Paya and Púcuru were at the bottom of their scale of priorities for Darién. They were not quite sure whether to employ these *Cuna* as forest guards, or what to do with them should the Panamerican Highway be completed through Darién.

Dra. Arosemena de Arosemena recommended that I should follow the advice of Dra. Torres de Araúz, particularly since I could thereby accompany a female student of anthropology from the University of Columbia in New York, who was also on a survey grant. She wanted to evaluate the situation of the relocated *Cuna* and Chocó Indians who had been displaced by the construction of the Bayano Dam. Permission to let her go into the Bayano, however, was denied. Some of the relocated *Cuna* had a few months earlier held as hostages a team from the United States, demanding ransom for their release. As a precaution, it was considered safer if this fellow anthropology student went with me to Paya and Púcuru.

Dra. Arosemena de Arosemena, nevertheless, thought that I should survey other groups in Panamá. As a historian, she was interested in tracing the ancestry of the *Cholos coclesanos* (indigenous countryfolk from Coclé). She was interested in knowing if these people in the central province of Coclé were culturally the same or different from the *Guaymí* in the western provinces of Bocas del Toro, Chiriquí, and Veraguas. The specific Indian ancestry of these indigenous countryfolk had not been clarified by other researchers (Conte Guardia 1964). In terms of social change, Dra. Arose-

mena thought that the peasant economy of these countryfolk warranted some assistance. There had been a husband and wife team from the United States who had been working with a handicraft cooperative among these people in the northern mountains of Coclé. Dra. Arosemena de Arosemena considered that this project should be followed up, particularly since the facilitators had left and the Directorate of Historical Patrimony was interested in increasing the production and commercialization of handicrafts.

Since the Catholic Church in Latin America undertakes many projects on socio-economic change, I decided to consult with Archbishop Marcos McGrath, head of the Catholic Church in Panamá, and with Monsignor Jesús Serrano, Apostolic Vicar of Darién and Bishop of Colón. Archbishop McGrath suggested a study of the *Guaymí* who had been resettled in Canquintú, a site in the province of Bocas del Toro, on the northwestern Caribbean side of Panamá. The Catholic Church had bought the facilities built at Canquintú by a Canadian road building company. The Laura Sisters were in charge of a schooling and nursing project for the *Guaymí* there. Monsignor Serrano also pointed to the Caribbean side of the Isthmus, but suggested instead the north-central region of the *Costa Abajo* (Lower Coast). Claretian missionaries working in the Vicariate of Darién (Pujadas 1976), had facilitated in 1976 the formation of a cooperative among indigenous countryfolk in the Rio Indio of the Lower Coast. This was to assist the countryfolk in the production and sale of agricultural products, particularly coffee. A better understanding of the socio-cultural organization of the countryfolk would help in coordinating the organization of the cooperative.

Dr. Roberto De la Guardia, a historian in the Faculties of Humanities at both the national University of Panamá and the Catholic University Santa María la Antigua, agreed with Monsignor Serrano that the region of the Lower Coast deserved attention. There I would find the indigenous countryfolk recommended by Bishop Serrano, who were the same people whom Dra. Arosemena and he also thought needed to be better defined. I would also find a black population at the mouths of the rivers in this region. The history of the blacks on the Isthmus had been one of his academic concerns (De la Guardia 1977), and he thought that a study linking the present with the past was very much needed. He considered, moreover, that a study of the Lower Coast would be very timely for purposes of comparison. At that time, there was a husband and wife team of students from the University of Illinois doing dissertation research in archaeology and socio-cultural anthropology in the northeastern *Costa Arriba* (Upper Coast) under a grant from the Organization of American States (Patricia Lund Drolet 1977 a, b, c; 1978; 1980; and Robert P. Drolet 1978, 1980).

At the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panamá, Dra. Olga Linares, an archaeologist in charge of the section on Human Ecology at S. T. R. I., also pointed to the Caribbean and a black population. She had excavated in the Caribbean northwestern province of Bocas del Toro (Linares 1976, 1977), and had become interested in the black West Indians there. The booms and busts undergone by these black West Indians at Bocas should yield significant data on social changes and recurring adaptations to cash economies.

Dr. Richard Cooke, also an archaeologist in the section on Human Ecology at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute agreed that the north-central Caribbean side of the Isthmus should be studied in greater depth archaeologically, historically, and ethnographically in order to establish its relation with what he had defined archaeologically as the "Central Cultural Region" in the central provinces on the Pacific side of

Panamá (Cooke 1976). In 1977, Dr. Cooke had done some surface collections along the Teriá and Indio rivers of the Lower Coast, and had found ceramic evidence that linked this region with the chronology of the central provinces of the Pacific side (Cooke personal communication). During this survey in 1977, while collecting living faunal specimens, Dr. Cooke had also found that the region was still heavily forested and considered that a study of the present inhabitants should contribute to the knowledge of human ecological adaptations in humid tropical forests. There was an urgency to do this before the forests were destroyed by the migration of cattle-raising people from the Pacific side of the Isthmus, who were increasingly invading forested regions on the Isthmus (Heckadon Moreno 1980; McKay 1980). Like Dr. De la Guardia, Dr. Cooke was also aware of the research that was then being done by Patricia and Robert Drolet in the north-eastern Upper Coast and also considered that it would be timely to have a comparative study on the north-central Lower Coast.

Finally, I consulted with several of the members in the Panamanian Association of Anthropology. Most of these anthropologists were working with government agencies in development projects. Their consensus was that in the future governmental efforts were going to be increasingly directed to the Caribbean side of the Isthmus. This was confirmed at the end of my survey upon the return to Panamá of General Omar Torrijos in September 1977 after signing in Washington, D. C., the new treaties on the Panamá Canal. In his return speech, he stated that now that the issue of the canal was settled, the government could direct its efforts towards other areas like the "Conquest of the Atlantic" (Dominical-La República 1977:7C).

The Surveys

During a period of three months and with a limited budget, I could not feasibly and sensibly survey all the areas and human groups that had been suggested by those consulted. In general, however, the consultations had revealed a felt need for research among the human groups in the Caribbean side of the Isthmus, other than the San Blas Cuna.

The Rio Indio of the Lower Coast

My first decision was to go the last week in June and the first week in July, 1977, to Rio Indio, on the Caribbean Lower Coast. This region was accessible by road and boat from my former home town of Colón, where I had first gone to visit relatives and friends upon my arrival in June 1977. Also, I was slightly familiar with the littoral zone of this region from sporadic visits in the past. During my primary and secondary school days, I had been on several school picnics to the impressive ruins of Fort San Lorenzo that the Spaniards had built at the mouth of the Chagres river in colonial times. During those colonial days, the Chagres river was the dividing line between the Lower Coast and the Upper Coast. To navigate west of the Chagres is in a southerly course following the downward curve of the inverted "S" shape of the Isthmus; hence, the nautical phrase Lower Coast to refer to the region west of the Chagres. To navigate east of the Chagres is in a northerly or upward course, hence, the phrase Upper Coast.

During my undergraduate college studies, the Spanish Fort San Lorenzo at the mouth of the Chagres river became the site of my first archaeological course in 1966. Under the direction of the well known historical archaeologist, the late Dr. Hale G. Smith, of The Florida State University, students of the F. S. U. branch in Panamá participated in digging at a section of the fort and at the site of the chapel in the village of Old Chagres. While digging at San Lorenzo, Dr. Smith invited some of his students to accompany him to the patronal festival of San Lorenzo celebrated on August 10 at New Chagres. This is where former residents of Old Chagres had been relocated in the 1910s as a precaution from flooding of the Chagres river during the construction of the Gatún Dam in the Panamá Canal. A cannon from the fort and the bell from the chapel at Old Chagres were still in use at New Chagres, being fired and rung respectively during the patronal festival. During the festivities on August 10, 1966, I had my first opportunity to see and imitate an anthropologist actively doing participant observation. The "Chief," as Dr. Smith was affectionately known by his students, guided us with pointed remarks and totally immersed us in participating in all the activities of that day, from the firing of the cannon at 6:00 a.m. through the dancing and drinking at night. "Because he felt that way himself, he had the ability to make lay people and beginning students regard the pursuit of anthropology as an exciting adventure" (Griffin 1978:3).

In 1967, a fellow student at F. S. U. invited me to go with her and her husband and children to the Dutch palm oil plantation at Icacal, further west from New Chagres on the Lower Coast. Her husband owned a firm in the Colón Free Zone and had business relations with the Dutch at the palm oil plantation. During that weekend, I was exposed to what the Dutch regarded as a labor problem in the region; that is, the people in the region did not want to work at the plantation. The Dutch, therefore, were flying migrant laborers from the Pacific side of Panamá into Icacal. The complaint by the Dutch followed very much the derogatory remarks often heard in Panamá about the population in the province of Colón, particularly in reference to the coastal blacks.

This attitude, however, was incongruous with stories that I had heard my father relate about huge pigs raised in this region, the quantities of turtles from this region sold in the market in Colón, and the rubber booms. In fact, my father's favorite rhyme to me as a child was in reference to the flower of the vine *Rivea campanulata* used in coagulating the sap of the rubber tree *Castilla panamensis*:

<i>La flor de la batatilla,</i>	The flower of the <i>batatilla</i> ,
<i>La flor sencilla,</i>	The simple flower,
<i>La modesta flor.</i>	The modest flower.

Though being so simple and modest as described in the rhyme, this flower and vine of the morning glory family *Convolvulaceae* had incalculable value to rubber production. Somehow I felt that this was metaphorically applicable to the people in these regions, whose simple and modest labor in collecting these cash products had made possible the economic booms that had contributed in part to the luster and glory experienced in the port city of Colón in days that my father had seen gone by in his lifetime (1895-1966). The inferred laziness of the coastal peoples who were said to wait lying down under a palm tree until the coconut fell was also incongruous with the images in my mind of the hardships in life and work in ironically

beautiful natural settings in the Upper Coast as described in the Panamanian novel appropriately titled *Juventudes Exhaustas* (Exhausted Youths) (Cantón 1963).

In 1970, I had also been invited aboard a helicopter flight that was taking a medical team from Colón to El Papayo in the inland mountainous zone of this region. I can still feel in my mind the clutching fingernails of the little girl who sat next to me on the return flight. She was accompanying her mother to the hospital in Colón. The mother was pregnant and the doctors thought that she would have complications in the delivery. The phenotype of both mother and daughter looked Indian, and they were wearing strings of color beads from which hung baby diaper pins. I wondered then about the Indian ancestry of these people, and which cultural group it might have been.

All this was in my mind that last week in June 1977 as I rode along a bumpy road on a truck crowded with passengers and merchandise, headed for Rio Indio. Accompanying me as a guide was a man whom I had met earlier in the week at a meeting in the parish hall of the Catholic Cathedral in Colón. Nine Spanish Claretian priests and three men from Rio Indio were meeting that day with a U. S. representative from the Inter-American Foundation, who had gone from Panamá City to Colón with another Spanish priest who was a coordinator for a Catholic agency that facilitated and administered funds for projects on social change in Panamá. The I. A. F. man was evaluating a proposal for the Pre-Cooperative Luz Campesina of Rio Indio, which was applying for funds for its operations. The proposal had been written by one of the missionary priests, who was acting as manager of the coop during its first year of operation. The I. A. F. representative had requested to talk with the members themselves. He did not have the time during his tight schedule from the United States to Panamá and other Central American countries to make the 6 to 8 hour trip by truck and dugout canoe to Rio Indio. The missionaries, therefore, had transmitted a message through a commercial radio station to leading members of the coop in Rio Indio to come to Colón for this meeting.

It became obvious during the meeting that the countrymen had not written the proposal, even though they did have ideas about the sort of projects they wanted to undertake in the cooperative. The I. A. F. representative, therefore, recommended that the countrymen rewrite the proposal themselves, defining more specifically their participation, and matching the funds requested with an estimated figure of their labor and the natural resources that they were putting into the project. The countrymen decided to stay overnight in Colón and meet in the evening of that same day, in the parish hall, to redraft the proposal with the assistance of the missionary-manager. Since I had made arrangements with these countrymen to visit their communities during my survey, I volunteered to report to the I. A. F. representative what I could learn about the cooperative.

The countrymen came from the settlements of Limón de Rio Indio, Boca de Uracillo, and Santa Rosa de Rio Indio. They kindly agreed to serve as my guides and introduce me to their communities.

Limón de Rio Indio

My first guide was the man from Limón, with whom I travelled from Colón. Also travelling with us were a young male cousin of his and the girl friend of this young man. The latter were tired of the city and were returning to the countryside for a while. It was most significant for me to observe how the parents, the brothers, the wife, nieces and nephews of this man from Limón received us upon our arrival. I was introduced as someone who had attended the meeting of the cooperative "of the priests," and that was the end of any further talk about the meeting or the cooperative. More important for this man's family was finding out how he had fared in the sale of the five pigs that he had taken to sell at the market and what items he had brought back from the written list of things that they had requested to be purchased in the city. There was something for everyone—medicines, food, clothing--and some disappointment and chiding by the wife at some item that had been forgotten. While he ate a homemade chicken soup and rice, the family reported on events that had occurred during his 3-day absence, including an account of the behavior of bovine animals distinguished individually by name. A family decision-making process ensued about the butchering and sale of a bovine the following week. There was also a discussion about who would attend the patronal festival of Mount Carmel on July 16 at the beach settlement of Miguel de la Borda, the capital of the district of Donoso. A decision was arrived as to who would paddle further upriver on Sunday to what they called the *pueblecillo* (little village) of Limón. It was agreed that Sunday would be the best day to introduce me to the rest of the community gathered at this site. They knew best what to do with me, and I wanted to see how this would be done.

On Sunday I discovered that the *pueblecillo* was the location of a primary public school, a Catholic chapel, two retail stores, a community hall, a dance hall, and a softball field. Very few families resided in the immediate vicinity of this nucleus. One of these few was the older brother of my host. This brother owned a retail store and the dugout outboard motorboat in which we had gone upriver the day I first travelled from Colón. My host, however, lived away from the nucleus, downriver, near to his parents' house, and close to the pastures where they could keep an eye on their animals.

When we arrived at Limón, the Catholic religious service conducted by lay men had already passed. This, I thought, had been purposely timed because there had been some discussion earlier in the morning at breakfast about one of my host's younger brothers discontinuing attendance at the training seminars to become a Delegate of the Word in the church. People who had attended the Celebration of the Word in a wooden building on stilts were now milling outside an adjacent long rectangular wooden building with a concrete floor and a zinc roof. Women and children were bringing food items into the long building. They were placing the items on a wooden shelf along one of the inner partition walls inside the building.

People stood in front of the shelf with the food items--some cooked, some raw. A woman with a notebook was writing down a list of names and the items brought by each individual. Another woman was tagging a piece of paper with a number to each item. Duplicate papers with numbers were placed inside a plastic bag. People could buy numbers from this bag at 10 cents a number. There was some excitement about what each got. My

host asked me if I would like to drink coconut water. Upon an affirmative reply, he gave 10 cents to the woman with the notebook, explained something to her, and got a green coconut directly from the shelf without taking a number from the plastic bag. He instructed his younger brother to cut it open for me.

When the activity subsided, my host introduced me to the woman with the notebook. She was the president of the Club of Housewives, who had organized the fair, as the food sale was called. She was one of the few who lived nearby and invited me to her house, a wooden structure on stilts like the house of my host and that of his parents. She first offered me some of the pudding of *nance* (*Brysonima crassifolia* L./H.B.K.) that she had kept at home, from the batch that she had cooked for the fair. She excused herself to go outside to chop some firewood with an ax, an opportunity that I took to ask if I could photograph her doing this, and promised that I would send her a print of the photo. The wood was to rekindle the fire so as to boil some water for coffee to serve to me.

Having taken care of these courtesies of hospitality, we talked over the cup of coffee about her activities in the Club of Housewives. She showed me the notebook where a record was kept of their activities. It listed mostly contributors to the fairs, items donated, plus amounts of cash profits. Every item, regardless of what it was, was worth 10 cents. The women in the Club had also planted some beans. She showed me a 50-lb. bag of beans that was surplus after distributing a prorated amount of pounds per member. She was in charge of selling this surplus at 10 cents a pound to any customer. I bought five pounds of beans, and explained to her that I would take them to my godmother who I knew would be pleased with this type of bean that was rarely seen in the city and that was used for a special traditional rice dish. The money collected by the housewives was used to buy uniforms, shoes, notebooks, and pencils for the school children, and to make loans to members in cases of emergency such as death or illness. She explained that most of the settlements had similar clubs, and that this type of organization had been initiated in the 1960s by school teachers. They had also been assisted by a Peace Corps volunteer who had originated the construction of the community building where the fairs were held. We also talked briefly about her life, where she was from, the husbands and children that she had had. I told her about my life, my parents who had died, that I had been an only child without brothers or sisters, that I had no husband or children, and about my studies at the university. I felt that if I wanted to know about other's people's lives, they were entitled to know about me, too.

While at her house, her husband came and invited me to attend the meeting of the *Junta Local*, of which he was the president. Two presidents of organizations in the same family! Was there any significance in this and the fact that they lived close to the nucleus? Were there families that controlled the socio-economic activities in this settlement? How? Why? Were my host and his brothers part of this core group, since the oldest brother was a store and boat owner and also resided in the nucleus? It would take more than a survey to discover the network pattern and socio-economic organization in this river system.

The *Junta Local*, I knew, was an organization that represented the lowest strata of the governmental political structure set up by the 1972 Constitution of the Republic of Panamá as a result of the military coup of 1968 by General Omar Torrijos (Dirección General para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad 1975). Although I had read about this system of political or-

ganization, I did not know exactly how it functioned. Yes, I definitely would like to attend this meeting.

The meeting was held at 1:30 p.m. in the same building where the fair had been held. About 12 or 15 men sat or squatted on the concrete floor, along the walls of one of the three partitions inside the building. My host did not squat inside but stood by the doorway leading to the outside. He introduced me to the group of men as someone who was interested in community organizations and had been recommended to him by the priests of the cooperative. I explained that I was studying in a university in the United States, and was looking at different areas in the country where I could return within a year to live for a year or two among the people to learn about what life was like in the area. In order to graduate from the university, I had to write a book about life in the place where I would live.

One man asked what would I teach. I clarified that I was not a teacher, that instead they were being my teachers and I would learn from them about life in this area. If there was anything that I knew of interest or importance to them, however, I would be willing to share that knowledge with them if they so desired. The institution that I hoped would sponsor the study, however, might be interested later on in sponsoring projects in the communities or in the region, like the cooperative, if this institution knew more about how the people themselves were organized and how they worked and lived. In this regard, I might be able to assist by finding out about their lives. I could not, however, promise that I would definitely return to this area. First I needed to look at other areas and other groups of people, then return to the university in the United States and consult with my professors about what to do, in the same way that I had seen my host consult with his family about what to do in the butchering and sale of a bovine animal. Finally, I asked for permission to record the meeting in a cassette. This was granted. I sat on the floor like them, and placed the recorder on the floor in front of me, visible to everyone.

During the meeting, individual men would stand up and talk. The main discussion dealt with conflicts between the *Junta Local* and the *Asentamiento Campesino*. The latter was an agricultural organization sponsored by the Ministry of Agricultural Development and the Agrarian Reform, as I knew from an article written by a Panamanian colleague (Heckadon Moreno 1977 a, b). This rural sociologist had also indicated that there was a conflict between this mode of agricultural organization and the socio-cultural structure of countryfolk in the province of Los Santos on the Pacific side of Panamá.

The conflict between the *Junta Local* and the *asentamiento campesino* in Limón was not readily comprehensible to me from the speech event at this meeting because I did not know the connotative meanings of the proverbs that were being used in the talk. Even though I was a Panamanian national like them and Spanish was also my maternal, first language, certainly I was an outsider to their culture. At one point I was thoroughly confused about what it was that the frog said to the cicada, and how that applied to what was being discussed. Possibly the frog and the cicada represented either of the two conflicting organizations. There might also be some implicit correlation between the behavior of these animals, particularly their sound systems, and the behavior of the members of the organizations, particularly their verbal behavior. These people residing in the countryside and exposed more closely to the natural behavior of animals certainly were more knowledgeable about that than a city-dweller like me in spite of all the ecology courses and field trips that I had taken.

Perhaps this way of talking was purposely done so as to conceal explicit meaning from me as I was recording the event. I could be thought of being a *sapo* (toad), the term that I knew was used throughout Panamá to refer to government spies.

Boca de Uracillo

When the meeting in Limón was over at 3:00 p.m. and I walked outside the building, I found waiting for me outside the man from Boca de Uracillo whom I had met at the meeting in the Cathedral in Colón. He had come down-river from Uracillo, accompanied by a nephew, to guide me to their settlement further upriver. This was the schedule that the men had made for me, and I was more than grateful for their arrangements since they knew the tempo of life in their communities. He told me that at Uracillo people who had gone to their nucleus that Sunday were waiting for my arrival to meet with me. He had so informed the people during the Celebration of the Word that he had conducted in the morning. He was sorry that I had not been there in the morning to see how beautiful it was to see the people coming from the hills to the chapel on Sunday morning.

My host installed me in the room by the side of the chapel and where the priest usually stayed. I was definitely being associated with the institution of the Catholic Church. He then told me that the wife of his nephew knew me, and she was inviting me to eat at her house. She was a school teacher and director of the school at Uracillo. I did not know her, however, and was surprised that someone in these mountains where I had never been before should know me. Nevertheless, in a small country like Panamá one could invariably find somebody who knew something about someone else! It turned out that this school teacher was the sister of a young man who had worked for a family that resided in the same apartment building in Colón where I had lived with my parents. Moreover, this young man was a tailor whom my mother had contracted at one time to sew a coat for me. His sister knew about this! My host had definitely been checking about me and had reported about my presence at the meeting in Colón. Participant observation was certainly going to be reciprocal here! It is so elsewhere, of course, but I was being made aware of it early in the game.

At 6:00 p.m. that evening, my host rang the chapel bell. People began to congregate in the missionary center. Like the community hall in Limón, this was also a long rectangular structure with a concrete floor. Unlike the hall in Limón, however, this center had walls of white cane (*Gynerium sagittatum* Aubl.) and a thatched roof. In contrast to Limón, people did not sit or squat on the floor here. Long wooden boards placed over concrete blocks served as benches lined along the walls. There seemed to be about 25 or 30 people gathered there, including men, women, and children.

My host introduced me in the same manner that I had been introduced to the *Junta Local* at Limón; that is, I was interested in the organization of the community and I was being recommended by the priests of the cooperative. I repeated what I had said at Limón. The brother of my host's wife then spoke. He was a school teacher and the supervisor of schools in this region. He seemed very authoritative, telling people how important it was to study the life of people in the countryside for they were also part of the country and people in the cities often did not know about the hardships of life in rural areas. It was also important, he said, to study about co-

operatives, even though the one he had organized a few years before had failed. They knew why it had failed, but it would also be good for me to know so that the same situation did not recur with the new cooperative. Even though I had said that I was not there to teach, he was sure that they would be able to learn from me just by talking with me, in the same manner that he and his wife had learned many things from a husband and wife team of Peace Corps volunteers who had resided in the community where he and his wife had been working as school teachers on the other side of the mountains, in the Pacific side.

The husband of the youngest sister of my host's wife then questioned if I had been authorized by the government to do this survey. Somehow he sounded a bit threatening and belligerent. Later I discovered that he was the rural police and that his family had a long ongoing feud with the family of my host's wife who was the oldest sister of his wife. The police officer's wife and her younger brother were having strained relations with their older siblings on account of the distributions of lands and animals after the death of their father the previous year. I apologized to the rural police for not showing the letter from the Sub-Director of Historical Patrimony to pertinent authorities introducing me and requesting their cooperation. I had purposely refrained from showing this letter, unless I got into some trouble. I did not want to be thought of being a government spy, particularly since there had been some guerilla fighting in these mountains against the military. It was rumored that these countryfolk had supported Arnulfo Arias, the President who had been deposed by the military. The rural police read the letter aloud by the light of the kerosene lamp that was standing in the middle of the floor.

A young man then spoke. Later I discovered that he was a younger brother of the rural police and was also a school teacher, though unemployed at the time. He appeared to be placating his brother, the policeman. He reminded the people that Uracillo had previously been studied by a team of archaeologists from the United States. They had written an article in a magazine that his father had at home. I acknowledged that this was true and that I had read this article in English (Sterling 1953). There were comments from several men and women who remembered this incident.

I inquired if there was a Club of Housewives here as there was in Limón. The director of the school replied in the affirmative, that she presided over it, and that the organization of such clubs was initiated by the wife of the supervisor of schools who had spoken previously. The meeting ended at 7:30 p.m. and people left with their flashlights lighting the way along muddy trails that led away from the nucleus to their houses in neighboring hills.

The event had served to raise several questions in my mind. Mainly, I wanted to know more about those who spoke. I would like to interview them further. What had happened to the previous coop that had failed? Could knowledge of its failure indeed help to organize better the new coop? People must be doing some record-keeping here if they had kept an English article in a magazine from two decades ago, and the story of this event had passed from one generation to the next. Also, I was being associated with the United States and with the Peace Corps. Perhaps that is why the police had questioned me. The Peace Corps had been officially evicted from Panamá in 1969, charged with intervening in the political structure of the nation and changing the culture of the people. Again, as in Limón, I felt like an outsider among people in my own country; yet, precisely because we were different I wanted to know more about them to understand my

country better.

The next couple of days were spent washing clothes and fishing in the river with the women. I visited and talked with those who lived in the immediate vicinity of the nucleus, and with those who came to the retail store from farther away. There appeared to be a social hierarchy between those who lived at the nucleus like my host, and those who lived farther away, in that the women at the nucleus would employ women from farther away to wash clothes. Several persons expressed their regret that the *principal* (founder) of the nucleus had died the previous year, for he could have told me many things about the history of the place. This reassured me that they understood what I was doing.

Again, they knew best about the tempo of life and the movement of people in this area. The supervisor of schools notified me that he was making a trip downriver to visit the director of the school at Santa Rosa, and that it would be advisable for me to go then with him to this settlement. Gladly I followed his advice.

Santa Rosa de Rio Indio

At Santa Rosa, I was accommodated in the missionary center, a structure bigger but similar to the center in Uracillo. Here, too, I was being institutionally associated with the Catholic Church. The young man from Santa Rosa whom I had met at the meeting in the Cathedral was not married, so his role as host was assumed by his older sister, who was married. She invited me to eat at her house, which I accepted. She had a charming, joking way of talking that made me feel very much at ease and at home. She explained that all the residents in this settlement belonged to one kin group, all descendants of the *principales* (founders) of the settlement, who were still alive and lived "inside," that is, away from the river, near their agricultural work sites.

Being all members of one kin group, there was apparently no need felt to introduce me formally in a meeting as had occurred in Limón and Uracillo. There was, however, what seemed to be an informal gathering on the evening of my first day there. On the terrace of the house of the oldest son of the *principales*, there gathered early in the evening a group of men, women, and children. Under the veneer of informality, I was nevertheless being formally interviewed by no one less than a Representative to the National Assembly of Representatives of *Corregimientos*, the highest organizational level in the Political Structure of the Panamanian Popular Power established by the 1972 Constitution (Dirección Nacional del Desarrollo de la Comunidad 1975). He was the second oldest son of the *principales*. Like the sister of my host, he also had a pleasant, joking manner of speech that created a natural, unstrained discourse even though I was being placed under scrutiny. I repeated what I had stated at the meetings in Limón and Uracillo. He and the others listened attentively. What followed during the next two hours made me realize that he understood what I was doing. He proceeded to give me a historical account of his kin group. When I realized what he was doing, I asked permission to take notes by the light of my flashlight. I was thrilled, I had been adopted by an informant. In relating the account, he would ever so often turn over to his older and younger brothers who were present and consult about details in the events he was describing, thus incorporating them in the discourse. So as to validate

his account, he concluded by recommending that I should walk "inside," that is, away from the river bank, to interview his father and mother, the *principales*. Though the old man was in his nineties and partially deaf and the old woman in her eighties, their minds were clear and they were still actively working. Later I discovered that this was a test to see if I was willing to walk "inside" into the work sites. My having done so and thus paying my respects to the *principales* really ingratiated me with this kin group, and they explicitly told me so.

At Santa Rosa, there was also an agricultural *asentamiento campesino* like at Limón. There seemed to be no conflicts, however, between the *Junta Local* and the *asentamiento* at Santa Rosa. Both organizations were under the control of the same kin group. The capital installations of the co-operative and the priests' house were also under the care of this kin group. Was control by a harmonious kin group residing in the same settlement the key factor to the apparently smooth functioning of all these introduced social changes? It would take more than a survey to answer this question.

Boca de Rio Indio

The day I had gone upriver it had been under a heavy downpour. It rained every day that I was upriver. It was only natural that my trip downriver should be under another heavy downpour. The atlas that I had consulted (Comisión del Atlas de Panamá 1975) indicated an annual rainfall of 4000 mm, and I believed it then! As I walked under my rain poncho unto the school portico, the director of the school at Boca de Rio Indio could not believe it. "How did you dare cross the hanging bridge under this torrential rain?" were her greeting remarks. I understood her concern. Should I have lost my hand grip of the cables or missed a step on the wooden boards of the hanging bridge over the mouth of the Rio Indio, I would have fallen into its murky waters and been washed out into the Caribbean Sea.

My contact with the Afro-Hispanic people at the mouth was not through the Catholic Church. There were no Afro-Hispanic members in the cooperative; therefore, I had to find other institutional affiliations with the Afro-Hispanics at the mouth of the Rio Indio. Fortunately, my mother had been a public school teacher in Colón and my godmother had worked for many years in the Provincial Directorate of Education in Colón. My godmother knew the director and one of the teachers at the school in Boca de Rio Indio.

This proved to be the right contact. The school was the principal secondary school in the region. Under a project of the United States Agency of International Development and the Ministry of Education of Panamá, the facilities of this school were to be remodeled and extended in 1978-80 under the vocational program of "production schools" (Isos 1977). In having such a project approved for her school, the political influence of the director was very significant in her dual role as the Representative for Boca de Rio Indio in the National Assembly of Representatives. The Representative of Santa Rosa had told me that he had tried to get a similar project for Santa Rosa but it was not approved. Was this indicative of different power status within the political structure of the nation between the upriver Hispanic-Indigenous people and the coastal Afro-Hispanic people? The latter also held the positions of mayor, judge, and treasurer in each

of the two districts of the province of Colón in this region. During my survey upriver, I had also noticed that most of the school teachers were Afro-Hispanic. During the Thursday marketing at the mouth of the river, I also observed that Afro-Hispanics owned and drove most of the trucks transporting the products of the Hispanic-Indigenous people that on that day came downriver in their boats to sell their products at the mouth and in Colón. This control of the transportation services by the Afro-Hispanics, and their initial exclusion as members in the previous cooperative, had been factors influencing the collapse of that coop, as I had been told in Uracillo. Was this a case in reverse from what Whitten (1965) had described between the low political power of the coastal Negroes in Ecuador and the higher political power of the highland *mestizos*? Again, I felt that the answer to this question would take more than a survey.

Other Areas Surveyed

Púcuru, Darién

Upon returning to Panamá City from the Lower Coast, I met with Alaka Wali, the female anthropology student from Columbia University. Together we made the arrangements to go to Paya and Púcuru in Darién as recommended by Dra. Reina Torres de Araúz, the Director of Historical Patrimony. We decided that each would stay in one of the two villages respectively: Alaka in Púcuru and I in Paya. Through the Directorate of Historical Patrimony, we contracted a pilot and a small plane from the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

The plane first stopped in Paya to drop me off. The people in Paya, however, backed by a South African male linguist of S. I. L. who was working there, refused to let me stay in their village. Alaka and I then decided to stay together in Púcuru if the people allowed us to stay there. To have two anthropologists in a village of 110 people must appear to have been a burden for the village. The villagers, however, handled the situation quite effectively. At any rate, they had had the precedent of two families of New Tribes missionaries working among them during the previous five years, although they were not residing there at that time. Alaka told the villagers that she was an Indian herself, having been born in India. The people, therefore, assigned her to live in the most Indian section of the village. Since I am a miscegenized Panamanian, I was assigned to live in the section of the village that had people of mixed Indian ancestry.

Alaka stayed for five weeks. I stayed for three weeks. During that period, New Tribes missionaries and S. I. L. personnel visited the village for one week. They invited us to eat with them one day and started to inquire about our motives for doing anthropological research. After they left, the villagers invited us to a religious session. At that time they questioned us about our attitudes toward religion. It was then that I decided that should we return to work there for a longer period of time, it would indeed be a strain upon the villagers to have to deal with both missionaries and anthropologists at the same time, particularly since the missionaries seemed to be influencing the Indians against anthropologists.

Alaka left in an S. I. L. plane. I left in a dugout motorized canoe with the Indian Representative to the National Assembly. He was attending a provincial meeting with officials from the Panamanian government, who were presenting development plans for the province at that meeting. Paradoxically, at the house where we stayed in El Real de Santa María prior to and after the meeting, a female cousin of the Indian Representative had had children with an uncle of the school teacher who had fed me in Boca de Ura-cillo in Rio Indio. What a small country Panamá is indeed, where I could travel from a north-central Atlantic region to a southeastern Pacific region and encounter people who were somehow related to one another. If these Indians were miscegenizing with other human groups and they were assigning me to live with their miscegenized people, I then thought it might be better for me to study miscegenized people as recommended by Dra. Arosemena, Chief of Scientific Investigations at Historical Patrimony.

Tigre, San Blas

Upon returning to Panamá City from Darién, I felt that I was still committed to survey the coconut trade in San Blas and possibly assist Dr. Alexander Moore as I had proposed to do when I applied for the survey grant. Dr. Moore was in Panamá City and I consulted with him. He recommended that I meet with Chief Estanislao López, one of the three principal chiefs of the San Blas *Cuna*. I met with Chief López at his residence in Panamá City. He, in turn, recommended that I survey the coconut cooperative that had been functioning for several years in the island of Tigre, in the western section of the Archipelago of San Blas. Chief López had jurisdiction over this section of the archipelago.

I flew to Tigre, San Blas, to reside there for the last two weeks in August and the first week in September 1977. After meeting at the evening council with the chiefs and the villagers and explaining that I had been in Rio Indio and Darién where I had done the same as I intended to do at Tigre, the chiefs assigned me to live with an extended family who had a member of mixed Indian ancestry. As in Púcuru, Darién, I was being associated with miscegenized people. Paradoxically for me but perhaps knowingly for the chiefs in Tigre, the oldest son of the family where I was assigned to live in Tigre had been married to a Hispanic-Indigenous woman from Rio Indio, the river where I had done my first reconnaissance and that I had so informed the people at Tigre at the council meeting.

The oldest son of this family in Tigre had fathered two daughters with this woman from Rio Indio. The oldest girl lived with her maternal *Natural* grandparents at Rio Indio. The youngest girl lived with her paternal *Cuna* grandparents in Tigre. The father of the two girls had separated from the *Natural* woman of Rio Indio. He lived in Colón and was now married to a *Cuna* woman. Again I felt as I did in Darién that, if these San Blas *Cuna* Indians were mixing with other human groups like the Hispanic-Indigenous people at Rio Indio, and I was being assigned to live with their miscegenized people, I should perhaps do research among miscegenized human groups who were the bulk of the Isthmian population and among whom little anthropological research had been conducted.

After participant observation among the members of the coconut cooperative in Tigre, I wished that the members of the cooperative of coffee growers at Rio Indio could have also shared this experience. The San Blas *Cuna* were masters at their own system of cooperative cash-cropping. It might, therefore, be better for me to observe people like those at Rio Indio who were being initiated by the missionaries in the organization of cooperatives as a commercial enterprise. Would indigenous forms of cooperative activities of the people at Rio Indio be incorporated into the organizational structure introduced by the missionaries? What process would the enterprise follow?

Map A.1 shows the survey sites.

The Choice

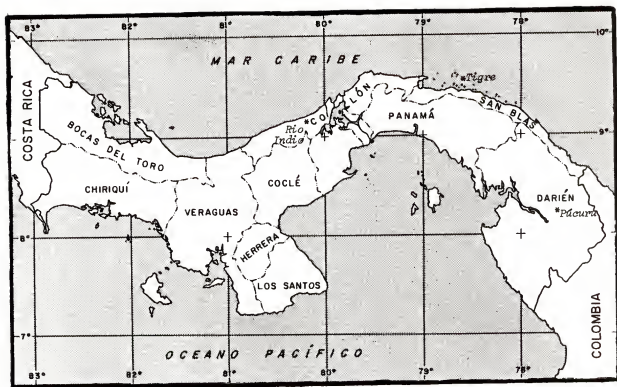
Upon submitting the reports of the surveys to Dra. Marcia Arosemena de Arosemena, Sub-Director of Historical Patrimony and Chief of Scientific Investigations, she commented that I was free to choose the region where and the people with whom to conduct the research. She, nevertheless, would recommend that I investigate the miscegenized human groups in the north-central Caribbean coast. Little anthropological research had been done among such groups, and the Atlantic side of the Isthmus was targeted for development by the government. These plans appeared to have been confirmed by the speech of General Torrijos the first week in September 1977 upon his return to Panamá after signing the Torrijos-Carter Treaty in Washington, D. C. I told Dra. Arosemena that I would decide after I returned to the United States and consulted with my professors at the University of Florida.

I reported to my professors at Florida that government officials like Dra. Arosemena strongly recommended researching the human groups in the north-central Caribbean coast as that was an area targeted for development. Most of the professors asked me if that was what I wanted to do. The question reflected what appears to be either a faddish psychological syndrome in the contemporary United States to let the individual do "her or his thing," or the ideal of the freedom of choice of the individual in the so-called "land of the free." In reality, choices for research in the United States are not entirely as free as they may appear to be. Most agencies in the United States that fund research, whether they be private or governmental, have priority subjects or areas for research that change periodically according to stipulated periods of time or according to situations facing this nation. For example, when in the 1960s and '70s the United States was experiencing an increased consumption of hallucinogens, researchers were encouraged by the monetary incentive of funding to do research on the use of hallucinogens in other countries. Professors and students in anthropology at the University of Florida took advantage of such funding for research on the use of hallucinogens (Carter 1976, 1980; du Toit 1976, 1977, 1978; Page 1977; Patridge 1974, 1979). Even in First World countries like the United States with more economic resources than Third World countries like Panamá, economic and human resources are channelled to find solutions, explanations, alternative actions, guidelines for national issues, problems, and crises. I considered, therefore, that Panamanian officials had a right to claim me as a human resource of Panamá

to serve in the best interest of my country.

Dr. Solón T. Kimball, chair of my doctoral committee, has been interested throughout his career in anthropology in the applied uses of anthropology for planning and policy-making processes. I felt, therefore, that he would back me in my final decision to work in the north-central coast of Panamá with the different human groups there. This decision was not influenced by any sense of guilt to want to do something for my own country rather than doing cross-cultural research in another country like the United States as had been recommended by some of my professors at the University of Florida. The reconnaissance in Panamá had served to prove to me that I was "crossing cultural boundaries" (Kimball and Watson 1972) in my own country.

The survey had also been important for other reasons. Above all, it was a decision-making process whereby I had been able to develop alternatives from which to reason out a choice. It had served to establish contacts not only with the people among whom I would do the research, but also with personnel in various institutions that would be interested in the research results. And most important with regard to this dissertation, it had revealed that people were carrying on development on their own and/or responding one way or another to development programs from outside agencies. Research data presented in the preceding chapters illustrates different indigenous development processes and responses.



Map A.1 Survey Sites of the Rio Indio, Pícuru, and Tigre
 (*) Denotes relative geographical location

APPENDIX II-A

SAMPLE OF THURSDAY MARKETING AT BOCA DE RIO INDIO SEP-NOV 1978¹

PRODUCTS MOST REGULARLY MARKETED AND SELLING PRICES IN US\$²

DATE	PLAINTAINS		BANANAS		COCONUTS		CHICKENS		DUCKS		PIGS	
	Each	Stem	Stem	Tot.	Each	Tot.	.60-.85/lb.	Tot.	.60-.85/lb.	Tot.	Avg. \$50 ea.	No.
1978	.03	\$1	.75-\$1		.10-.20							Tot.
SEP 7	980	14	44.00	77	74.00	3,030	393.00	53	201	149.85		2
SEP 28	700	2	21.75	48	43.75	2,901	482.35	82	246	148.95	3	12
OCT 19	500	3	16.00	86	76.75	2,135	415.30	115	389.3	236.75	18	54
OCT 26	300	13	18.00	83	83.00	1,187	182.72	117	454.2	328.95	9	50.7
NOV 9	500	7	19.00	91	90.30	1,119	162.20	49	127.7	108.45	2	7.2
NOV 23	220		7.00	89	83.00	2,112	406.20	138	424.5	338.95		14
											29	1450.00

1 This sample includes only two days per month, but the marketing is one weekly every Thursday. The dates in this sample include those that coincide with paydays in the urban centers when there is a slight increase in the volume of trade.

2 This does not include a variety of other seasonal or irregular products; for example, coffee and cattle. For a sample of the marketing of coffee see Appendix IV which only covers the volume traded at the Cooperative Luz Campesina.

APPENDIX II-B

VENDORS AND WHOLESALE BUYERS AT THE THURSDAY MARKET, BOCA DE RIO INDI¹

DATE	V	E	N	O	R	S ²	US\$ PAID TO VENDORS	No. of WHOLESALE BUYERS	Areas where products were to be retailed
1978	No.	(Agro-Living Site)	3						
SEP 7	39	16				\$1,582.75	8		Boca de Rio Indio
SEP 28	29	16				\$2,205.00	7		Agro-Industrial Cooperative of Icaçal Street Corner Vending Stands in Colón
OCT 19	39	21				\$3,050.48	9		Municipal Market in Colón Chinese Vegetable Vending Stand at Margarita, Canal area near Colón.
OCT 26	44 ⁴	19				\$2,763.85	9		Limón, Transisthmian Highway near Colón Chilibre, Madden/Alhajuela Highway
NOV 9	40	18				\$1,401.05 ⁵	7		Nuevo Veranillo, near to Panamá City Alto de las Cumbres, near to Panamá City
NOV 23	39	20				\$2,515.15	8		Rio Abajo, suburban area of Panamá City San Francisco, suburban area of Panamá City.
									Municipal Market in Panamá City Chorrera, town near Panamá City Pacora, town near Panamá City Penonomé, city and capital of Coclé province on the Pacific plains.

1 Does not include coffee and cattle wholesale buyers who are seasonal (for coffee) and irregular (for cattle).

2 This includes some intermediaries who are collectors of products in their home settlements, usually at their own retail store or their own seagoing boat.

3 This includes sites along the rivers Indio, Uracillo, Gobeá, and Miguel de la Borda, as well as the littoral area between the rivers Indio and Miguel de la Borda.

4 The increase in the number of vendors reflects the higher demand for foodstuffs, especially chickens and pigs, for the national holidays celebrated in November 1-5.

5 Exclusive of US\$156.75 lost in beef when a canoe capsized due to sudden flooding in the river.

APPENDIX III

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, PATRON SAINT "STREET" FEAST, SANTA ROSA DE RIO INDIO, 1 SEPTEMBER 1979*

(Based on blackboard notes made at the meeting of the *Junta Local*, held in the school building, September 3, 1979, at Santa Rosa de Rio Indio.)

Earnings:

Ring Tossing Game	US\$ 20.57	
Dance	395.80	
Restaurant	110.45	
Bar	<u>986.90</u>	
		1,513.72

Cost of Operation:

84 Cases, Beer, Cans, US\$ 6.75/Case	567.00	
2 Cases, Beer, Pint, 6.00/Case	12.00	
8 Cases, Rum, Bottle, 33.60/Case	100.80	
2 Cases, Rum, Pint, 34.65/Case	69.30	
12 Cases, Soda, 3.60/Case	43.20	
85 Pounds, Beef, 0.50/Pound	42.50	
35.5 Packs, Cigarettes, 0.50/Pack	17.80	
7.5 Packs, Cigarettes, 0.60/Pack	4.32	
Permit from the <i>Corregiduria</i>	30.00	
National Guard	19.00	
Advertising, Posters	9.00	
Advertising, Radio	28.00	
Ice	34.95	
Gasoline, Electric Generator of the Cooperative	35.60	
Electric Cable	50.00	
Light Bulbs, Sockets	5.30	
Food Condiments (Excluding donations of plantains and root crops, and firewood)	4.40	
Music Band	596.85	
Transportation	101.85	
Loudspeaker Rental	26.00	
Tossing Rings	<u>6.30</u>	
		<u>1,804.17</u>
Gross Loss		(290.45)

(Continued)

*The "priest's" feast was held on August 30, the liturgical date for Saint Rose of Lima.

Balance Brought Forward, Gross Loss (290.45)

Actives

Cash on hand	45.85	
Electric Cable, Sockets, Light Bulbs	55.30	
Rum, Final Inventory	54.00	
Refund, Loudspeaker Rental	26.00	
Tossing Rings	6.30	
Accounts Receivable (Bar)	76.00	
Refund, Soda Bottles	9.00	
Donation, Electric Cable from National Guard	50.00	
		<u>322.45</u>
<u>Net Earnings</u>		<u>US\$ 32.00</u>

NOTE: Initial capital for the cost of operations was borrowed from the store of the *Asentamiento Campesino Santa Rosa No. 2*.

APPENDIX IV-A

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, PRE-COOPERATIVE LUZ CAMPESSINA, R. L., RIO INDIIO, 1978

TOTAL SALES

	Sta. Rosa	Uracillo
Coffee	65,101.21	24,513.08
Rice	1,706.85	
Corn	199.90	
Others	88.35	
	<u>67,096.31</u>	<u>24,513.08</u>

91,609.39

(LESS) COST OF SALES

Initial Inventory	
Coffee	880.00
Rice	3,071.28
Corn	90.00
Others	<u>150.00</u>
	4,191.28
(Plus) Net Purchases	
Coffee	60,888.74
Rice	22,724.66
Corn	62.44
Others	572.61
	119.44
	203.60
	<u>61,784.39</u>
	84,571.49

(Plus) Freight	3,731.42	1,789.92
(Result) Merchandise Available	<u>5,521.34</u>	<u>94,284.11</u>

(Less) Final Inventory	
Coffee	3,615.13
Corn	<u>72.00</u>

3,687.13

90,596.98

1,012.41 (In US\$)

Continued

EARNINGS BY PURCHASES AND SALES (GROSS)

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD - GROSS EARNINGS BY PURCHASES AND SALES

1,012.41

(Plus) Earnings by Services

Santa Rosa	1,970.00
Uracillo	683.85
Interest Received	25.47
Freight Charges	83.00
Donations	<u>8,637.30</u>

11,399.62

12,412.03

GROSS RESULTS

(Less) Expenses

Education	Sta. Rosa	Uracillo
Salaries	<u>381.81</u>	<u>40.50</u>
Constructions	1,375.90	336.00
Fuel		166.26
Various Expenses	252.17	500.00
Maintenance		77.31
Machinery and Tools	1,009.64	75.67
Furniture and Utensils	1,512.37	2,801.02
Per Diem		60.85
Payment of Loans		384.00
	<u>3,772.33</u>	
	8,304.72	<u>4,441.61</u>

12,746.33
(US\$ 334.30)

(Excerpt of Proceedings of the Ordinary General Assembly held in Santa Rosa, April 7-8, 1979.
Translation mine)

APPENDIX IV-B

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS, PRE-COOPERATIVE LUZ CAMESINA, R. L., RIO INDIO, JAN-JUN 1979

TOTAL SALES

<u>Santa Rosa</u>		
Coffee	60,327 lbs.	37,796.97
Corn	80 lbs.	6.40
Rice		280.81
Others (Nails, Sacks)		<u>3.10</u>
		38,087.28
<u>Uracillo</u>		
Coffee	17,542 lbs.	12,196.14
Rice		<u>837.71</u>
		13,033.85
<u>Coquillo</u>		
Coffee	5,453 lbs.	3,523.44
Rice	3,711 lbs.	853.75
Cattle		<u>220.00</u>
		4,597.19
<u>Limón</u>		
Coffee	7,546 lbs.	4,853.22
Rice	2,504.35 lbs.	<u>576.00</u>
		5,429.22
<u>Las Cruces</u>		
Coffee	19,536 lbs.	12,707.14
Rice	434.78 lbs.	<u>100.00</u>
		12,807.14
		<u>73,954.68 (In US\$)</u>

Continued

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD - TOTAL SALES

73,954.68

(LESS) COST OF SALES

Initial Inventory

Santa Rosa
Coffee 2,900 lbs. 1,537.00
Corn 6.00
Others (Nails, Sacks) 2.70

1,545.70

(Plus) Net Purchases

Santa Rosa
Coffee 57,393.12 lbs. 31,088.01
Rice 12,000 lbs. 2,500.00
Cattle 230.00
Purchasing capital for
Manager and Operators 8,612.49

(To distribute to other stations)

42,430.50

Uracillo
Coffee 16,389.08 lbs. 9,006.04

Coquillo
Coffee 5,453 lbs. 4,648.69
Cattle 350.00

4,998.69

Limón
Coffee 7,741.75 lbs. 4,381.83

Las Cruces
Coffee 20,927 lbs. 11,509.85
Rice 434.78 lbs. 100.00

11,609.85

72,426.91

73,972.61 (In US\$)

Continued

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD - TOTAL SALES

73,954.68

Balance brought forward on Cost of Sales

73,972.61

(Plus) Freight

Santa Rosa 1,760.33
 Uracillo 643.52
 Coquillo 117.30
 Limón 192.62
 Las Cruces 376.50

3,090.27

77,062.88

MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE FOR SALE

(Less) Final Inventory

Coquillo
 Coffee 2000 lbs. 1,280.00
 Cattle 130.00

1,410.00

75,652.88

TOTAL COST OF SALES

GROSS LOSS BY PURCHASES AND SALES

(1,698.20)

(PLUS) EARNINGS BY SERVICES

Santa Rosa
 Coffee Shelling 32,647.5 lbs. 814.59
 Operator's Error (Paid -(Charged +) 4.57
 Loan to buy coffee 2,000.00

2,819.16

Uracillo
 Coffee Shelling 16,179 lbs. 323.27
 Operator's Error (Paid -(Charged +) 6.47
 Loan to buy coffee 2,000.00
 Purchasing capital extended by Sta.Rosa 1,500.00

3,829.74

BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD

6,648.90 (In US\$)

(Continued)

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD - GROSS LOSS BY PURCHASES AND SALES

(1,698.20)

Balance brought forward - Earnings by Services 6,648.90

Coquillo

Coffee Shelling 1,642.5 lbs. 32.46
 Operator's Error (Paid -/Charged +) 20.79
 Loan to buy coffee 2,000.00

2,053.25

Limón

Coffee Shelling 12,191 lbs. 243.84
 Operator's Error (Paid -/Charged +) 1.03
 Purchasing capital extended by Sta. Rosa
 to Manager, a resident of Limón, to buy
 cattle and make loans to members. 3,912.49
 Loan to buy coffee 2,000.00

6,157.36

Las Cruces

Coffee Shelling 26,545.75 lbs. 533.32
 Operator's Error (Paid -/Charged +) 3.45
 Certificates of Membership 70.00
 Loan to buy coffee 2,000.00
 Purchasing capital extended by Sta. Rosa 3,200.00

5,806.27

GROSS EARNINGS BY SERVICES

20,665.78
18,967.58

(In US\$)

Continued

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD - GROSS EARNINGS BY SERVICES

18,967.58

(LESS) EXPENSES

	Sta. Rosa	Uracillo	Coquillo	Limón	Las Cruces
Education and Meetings	41.25	3.00		24.72	24.00
Salaries and Per Diem	445.85	179.53		111.52	267.90
Materials, Repairs, Equipment	375.99	32.10			95.16
Fuel (Diesel/Grease/Gasoline)	261.82	122.20		203.00	91.75
Operator's Error (Paid+/Charged-)	3.87	51.22	3.48	2.20	1.82
Payment of Loan and Purchasing Capital	2,000.00	4,420.24	1,720.23	1,289.92	6,923.05
Interest on Loan	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Robbery 1000 lbs. Coffee			640.00		
Loss of Sacks		32.05			
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,148.78	4,860.34	2,383.71	1,651.36	7,423.68
NET LOSS					19,467.87
					(US\$ 500.29)

(Based on the accounting of receipts and notebooks kept by the accountant of the cooperative at the shelling and buying station of Santa Rosa, July 1979.)

APPENDIX V

STATEMENT OF EARNINGS AND LOSSES - CONSUMPTION STORE SANTA ROSA NO. 2 (Based on Manager's Record of Sales and Expenses)

1979

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>SALES</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>EARNINGS</u>	<u>LOSS</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
JAN	5,787.80	5,481.64	306.16		
FEB	6,076.50	4,541.16	1,535.34		
MAR	6,000.00	5,059.39	940.61		
APR	4,490.50	5,489.84		999.34	*Easter feast?
MAY	4,121.50	3,675.67	445.83		
JUN	4,684.50	3,320.55	1,363.95		
JUL	3,587.00	2,144.61	1,442.39		
AUG	3,383.50	3,031.62	351.88		
SEP	2,803.00	2,617.47	185.53		*Patronal festi- val?
OCT	2,455.50	2,060.20	395.30		
NOV	3,467.00	2,911.15	555.85		
DEC	<u>3,933.29</u>	<u>3,297.06</u>	<u>636.23</u>		
	50,790.09	43,630.36	8,159.07	999.34	
NET EARNINGS		US\$7,159.73	US\$7,159.73		

*Loss and low earnings may reflect the fact that the store subsidizes the initial purchases for a "street" feast. See Appendix III for a statement of accounts of the "street" feast of September 1, 1979

NOTE: Accountants from the Ministry of Agricultural Development inventory and audit the store every six months. This appendix is not based on their reports, but on the manager's records. He is very methodical but has never taken an accounting course which is reflected in his tendency to round up cents in the case of sales for each day.

APPENDIX VI

ITEMS AND RETAIL PRICES AT CONSUMPTION STORE SANTA ROSA NO. 2

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE	US \$		PERCENT VARIATION 1977-1980
	PRICE JUL. 1977	PRICE FEB. 1980	
MILK POWDER KLIM CAN 1/2lb BORDEN, NEW YORK/CHIRICANA DE LECHE, S.A., PANAMA	1.25	1.50	+ 20
MILK POWDER LACTOGENO CAN 1/2lb NESTLE, HOLLAND/NESTLE HONDUREÑA, S.A. HONDURAS	1.60	1.80	+ 12.5
MILK EVAPORATED IDEAL CAN 170g COMPANIA PANAMENA DE ALIMENTOS, S. A.	.20	.20	---
MILK EVAPORATED IDEAL CAN 400g COMPANIA PANAMENA DE ALIMENTOS, S. A.	.40	.40	---
MILK CONDENSED SUGARED CAN 397g NESTLE, NEW YORK/CIA. PANAMENA DE ALIMENTOS	.55	.70	+ 27.2
OATS ROBIN HOOD CAN 400g	.75	.75	---
OATS QUAKER CAN 400g	.20	.20	---
CORN FLAKES KELLOG BOX 25g KELLOG DE CENTRO AMERICA, GUATEMALA	.05	.05	02.
BARLEY BAG MOLINO CRIOLLO, PANAMA	.05	.05	02.
CORN CREAM BAG MOLINO CRIOLLO, PANAMA	.20	.23	+ 15
SOUP CHICKEN MAGGI ENVELOPE 60g NESTLE/CIA. PANAMENA DE ALIMENTOS, S. A.	.35	.45	+ 28.5
SOUP VEGETABLE MONARCH CAN	.05	.05	---
BOUILLON MAGGI CUBE NESTLE/CIA. PANAMENA DE ALIMENTOS, S. A. (2 cubes)	.30	.30	---
SARDINES IN TOMATO SAUCE DEL MAR CAN 156g CONSERVAS DEL MAR, PANAMA	.40	.45	+ 12.5
TUNA CRATED IN OIL REY DEL MAR CAN 70g PROCONSA, PERU	.35	1.40 lb.	+ 28.5
COODFISH, DRY SALTED	.45	.45	---
SAUSAGE VIENNA CINTA AZUL CAN 142g COSTA RICA	.50	.75	+ 50
SAUSAGE VIENNA PIONIC CAN	.80	.80 lb.	+ 12.5
PORK LUNCHEON MEAT KRAFT CAN 198g	.08	.09 oz.	+ 15.3
PORK LUNCHEON MEAT TULIP CAN 198g ROYAL DISTRIBUTOR FOR THE COURT OF DENMARK	.65	.75	---
PORK TAILS CURED PACKED IN BRINE GREAT LAKES PACKING CO., CHICAGO, USA	1.15	1.15	---
OIL COOKING PABITO PLASTIC BAG oz. PANAMA BOSTON, PANAMA	4.75	4.75	---
OIL COOKING COCINERO PLASTIC BOTTLE 1/8 gal. CIA. PANAMENA DE ACEITES, PANAMA	.20	.23	+ 15
OIL COOKING COCINERO PLASTIC BOTTLE 1/4 gal. CIA. PANAMENA DE ACEITES, PANAMA	.15	.20	+ 33
OIL COOKING COCINERO PLASTIC BOTTLE 1 gal. CIA. PANAMENA DE ACEITES, PANAMA			
RICE SHELLLED 2ND CLASS PANAMA			
FLOUR WHEAT IMPORTED			

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE

	US\$		PERCENT VARIATION 1977-1980
	JUL. 1977	FEB. 1980	
FLOUR CORN BOX 80g ANTIQUEÑA COLOMBIA	.10	.10	---
FLOUR CORN BOX 80g MAIZEPAN, LEVAPAN DE PANAMA, S. A., PANAMA			---
YEAST WHITE	.05	.05	---
YEAST ACTIVE DRY	.05	.05	---
BAKING POWDER	.05	.05	---
PASTA - SPAGUETTI, NOODLES, ELBOWS, SHELLS	.35	.35	---
POTATOES	.25	.25	1b.
OINTONS GOLDEN HARVEST, USA	.25	.30	1b.
BEANS MONARCH CAN	.60		+ 20
BEANS w/PORK TOMATO SAUCE CAMPBELL CAN 227g CAMPBELL SOUP CO., NEW JERSEY, USA		.45	
BEANS (1977 LOCALLY GROWN; 1980 IMPORTED)	.20	.60	1b.
BEANS LENTILS IMPORTED	.18	.60	1b.
PASTE TOMATO MONARCH CAN 3/4 oz.		.20	+ 11
PASTE TOMATO MAGGI CAN 3/4oz.KEMPTALL, SWITZERLAND; MAGGI, S. A., PANAMA		.30	
PASTE TOMATO MAGGI CAN 6 oz.KEMPTALL, SWITZERLAND; MAGGI, S. A., PANAMA		.60	+ 16.6
SAUCE TOMATO MONARCH CAN 163g	.25		
SAUCE TOMATO MAGGI CAN 163g KEMPTALL, SWITZERLAND; MAGGI, S. A., PANAMA		.30	+ 20
KETCHUP TOMATO MAGGI BOTTLE 397g KEMPTALL, SWITZERLAND; MAGGI, S. A., PANAMA	.60	.70	+ 16.6
MAYONAISE SALAD BOWL BOTTLE 113g KRAFT FOOD, S. A., PANAMA	.55		
SUGAR WHITE ESTRELLA AZUL / SANTA ROSA, PANAMA (SANTA ROSA MILLS, COCILE)	.15	.25	+ 33.3
SUGAR BROWN ESTRELLA AZUL / SANTA ROSA, PANAMA (SANTA ROSA MILLS, COCILE)	.20		
SALT IODIZED PLASTIC BAG (SALT FLATS OF PACIFIC SHORELINE)	.10	.10	
PEPPER BLACK GROUND PLASTIC BAG .5g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A. PANAMA	.05	.08	+ 60
PEPPER BLACK GROUND MAISON ROYAL CAN 31g	.40		
GARLIC LOOSE TEETH PLASTIC BAG .5g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A. PANAMA	.05	.08	+ 60
OREGANO PLASTIC BAG .5g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A. PANAMA	.05	.08	+ 60
CINNAMON STICK PLASTIC BAG 1g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A. PANAMA	.05	.08	+ 60
CINNAMON STICK 1/4 lb.	.75		
CLOVE PLASTIC BAG .5g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A., PANAMA	.05	.08	+ 60
NUTMEG PLASTIC BAG .5g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A., PANAMA	.05	.08	+ 60
COFFEE SHELLED UNTOASTED UNGROUND (LOCALLY GROWN)	.40	.60	+ 50
TEA BLACK LIPTON BAG .5g	.04		
TEA BLACK RIK'S BAG .5g ALIMENTOS SUPERIORES DE PANAMA, S. A., PANAMA		.05	+ 25

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE	US\$		PERCENT VARIATION 1977-1980
	JUL. 1977	FEB. 1980	
TEA CAMOMILE PLASTIC BAG .5g ESPECIES SASONE, S. A., PANAMA	.70	.10	
COCOA PETERY CAN 4oz. PETERY, ENGLAND		.18	
COCOA NESTLE ENVELOPE 28.3g THE NESTLE COMPANY, INC., NEW YORK, USA	.05	.05	*
CRACKERS SODA CELLOPHANE WRAPPING GALLETTAS PASCUAL, PANAMA		1.85	
CRACKERS SODA CARTON WHOLESAL GALLETTAS PASCUAL, PANAMA	.05	.05	*
CRACKERS SALTED PACK CELLOPHANE WRAPPING GALLETTAS PASCUAL, PANAMA		2.30	
CRACKERS SALTED CARTON WHOLESAL GALLETTAS PASCUAL	.05	.05	*
COOKIES, MARIA, ANIMALS, VANILLA, SANDWICH, CELLOPHANE PACK, GALLETTAS PASCUAL		1.85	
COOKIES, MARIA, ANIMALS, VANILLA, SANDWICH, CARTON WHOLESAL	.05	.05	*
COOKIES LEMON SANDWICH PASCUAL CELLOPHANE PACK GALLETTAS PASCUAL		1.65	
COOKIES LEMON SANDWICH PASCUAL CARTON WHOLESAL GALLETTAS PASCUAL		.20	
JUICE FRUIT MAGGI CAN .16 lt. MAGGI, S. A., PANAMA	.35	.40	+ 14.2
JUICE FRUIT MAGGI CAN .35 lt. MAGGI, S. A., PANAMA	.10	.15	+ 50
SODA COCA-COLA, ORANGE, PINEAPPLE, CHAMPAIGNE, LEMON, 7-UP, APPLE, BOTTLE	.35	.45	+ 28.5
BEER BALBOA or PANAMA BOTTLE PINT CERVECERIA PANAMA or CERVECERIA NACIONAL		.50	
BEER BALBOA or PANAMA CAN	2 x.05	.05	*
COOL-AID ENVELOPE	5 x.05	.06	*
PUNCH TROPIC POWDER RIKA-AID ENVELOPE log. ALIMENTOS SUPERIORES, S.A., PANAMA		4x.05	
CANDY MINT	1.15	1.15	*
CANDY MINT WHOLESAL BAG	4 x.05	3x.05	*
CANDY FRUIT FLAVORS	1.20	1.20	*
CANDY FRUIT FLAVORS WHOLESAL BAG	4 x.05	3x.05	*
GUM CANDY PEPIITO, OSITO, BUM		1.20	
GUM CANDY PEPIITO, OSITO, BUM WHOLESAL BAG	.10	.15	+ 50
GUM CHEWING ADAM'S CHICKLETS WARNER LAMBERT CO., ADAMS PANAMA, S. A., PANAMA	2 x.05	3x.10	*
CI GARRETTES MENTOLATED, BELMONT, VICEROY, MARLBORO		4.75	
CI GARRETTES MENTOLATED, BELMONT, WHOLESAL CARTON		5.25	
CI GARRETTES VICEROY, MARLBORO, WHOLESAL CARTON		.75	
TOBACCO LEAVES, DRY, 1/4 lb.	.75	1.15	+ 53.3
KEROSENE, 1 gal.			

*Reduction in number of crackers or cookies from 6 to 5 or 4 to 3, thus paying the same but for less quantity. Other items, reduction in size or quantity.

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE	US\$		PERCENT VARIATION 1977-1980
	JUL. 1977	FEB. 1980	
MATCHES BOX	.05	.05	
MATCHES CARTON WHOLESALE		2.50	
CANDLES 6 in.	.06	.09	+ 50
BATTERY NATIONAL JAPAN	.25	.25	*
BATTERY NATIONAL WHOLESALE CARTON JAPAN		5.25	
BATTERY RAYOVAC GUATEMALA	.25	.30	+ 20
BATTERY RAYOVAC GUATEMALA CARTON WHOLESALE		6.00	
BATTERY EVEREADY COSTA RICA	.25	.30	+ 20
BATTERY EVEREADY COSTA RICA CARTON WHOLESALE		5.75	
FLASHLIGHT	2.10	2.45	+ 16.6
BULB FLASHLIGHT		.20	
BULLET LONG 1 ea.	.40	.50 ea.	+ 25
BULLET LONG BOX WHOLESALE		2.50	
BULLET SHORT	.30	.40	+ 33.3
BULLET SHORT BOX WHOLESALE		2.25	
SOAP CARBOLIC RAINBOW BAR	.10	.12	+ 20
SOAP BATHING PALMOLIVE BAR 75g COLGATE-PALMOLIVE CENTRO-AMERICA/CIA. PANAMENA			
DE ACEITES	.30	.30	*
SOAP BATHING CASHMERE BOUQUET BAR 75g		.30	
SOAP SANDALWOOD BEE & FLOWER BAR 81g CHINA		.30	
SOAP BATHING LIFEBOUY, LUX, CECIBON 150g INDUSTRIAS PANAMA BOSTON, PANAMA	.32	.32	*
SOAP LAUNDRY RINA BAR 150g	.12	.13	+ 8.3
SOAP LAUNDRY LAVASOL BAR 150g COLGATE-PALMOLIVE CENTRO-AMERICA/COMPACETTES, PMA.	.13	.14	+ 7.6
SOAP LAUNDRY AMERICANO BAR 150g BARRAZA Y CIA., PANAMA	.13	.13	*
SOAP POWDER LAVASOL, AVA ENVELOPE 50g GOLGATE-PALMOLIVE CENTRO-AMERICA/COMPACETTES, PANAMA	.10	.10	
SOAP POWDER VIVA BOX 202g COLGATE-PALMOLIVE CENTRO-AMERICA/COMPACETTES, PANAMA	.35	.35	
SOAP POWDER ESE, SEIS, BOX 202g INDUSTRIAS PANAMA BOSTON, PANAMA	.35	.35	
SOAP POWDER AJAX BOX 1260g COLGATE-PALMOLIVE CENTRO AMERICA/COMPACETTES, PANAMA	2.05	2.05	
BLEACH CLOROX PLASTIC BOTTLE	.25	.28	+ 12
PAPER TOILET KORAL ROLL	.23	.27	+ 17.3
ASPIRIN BAYER SEALED ENVELOPE LABORATORIO BAYER DE CENTRO AMERICA, S. A., EL SALVADOR 2x.05		2x.05	

*Reduction in size or quantity, thus paying the same but for less.

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE	US \$		PERCENT VARIATION 1977-1980
	JUL. 1977	FEB. 1980	
ASPIRIN EFFERVESCENT SEALED ENVELOPE LABORATORIO BAYER DE CENTRO AMERICA, S. A. EL SALVADOR			
ASPIRIN ANACIN SEALED ENVELOPE WHITEHALL LABORATORIES, INC., NEW YORK, USA	2x .05	2x.05	.15
ASPIRIN MEJORAL SEALED ENVELOPE STERLING PRODUCTS	2x .05	2x.05	
ASPIRIN BUFFERIN SEALED ENVELOPE	2x .05	2x.05	
AIKA-SELTZER, SEALED ENVELOPE	1x .05	1x.05	
AIKA-SELTZER, SEALED ENVELOPE			.55
EFFERVESCENT TABLIN SEALED ENVELOPE MILES LABORATORIES, MILES, S. A., GUATEMALA	2x .10	2x.15	.10
DESENFRIOL (FOR COLDS, DESCONGESTANT) SEALED ENVELOPE	2x .10	2x.15	
DESENFRIOLITO (FOR CHILDREN) SEALED ENVELOPE			
VITAPIRENA (POWDER) SEALED ENVELOPE	.15	.20	
OINTMENT MENTHOLATUM CAN THE MENTHOLATUM CO., LTD., ENGLAND	.15	.15	+ 33
OINTMENT VICK'S CAN	.15	.15	
OINTMENT MENTONOVÁ CAN	.25	.25	
SYRUP COUGH VICK'S FORMULA 44 BOTTLE	.90	.90	
EXPECTORANT JAYNE BOTTLE	.85	.85	
SYRUP COUGH BREACOL BOTTLE STERLING PRODUCTS, INTERNATIONAL, S. A., PANAMA	.75	.75	
SYRUP COUGH WHITE PINE BOTTLE	.75	.75	
SYRUP COUGH PECTORAL DON BOSCO BOTTLE LABORATORIOS VITAE, S. A., PANAMA	.90	.90	
HYDROGEN-PEROXIDE BOTTLE	.35	.35	
ALCOHOL BOTTLE	.70		
ALCOHOL BOTTLE ASTRA, LABORATORIOS ASTRA, S. A., PANAMA	.45		*
MENTICOL BOTTLE ASTRA, 15oz. LABORATORIOS ASTRA, S. A., PANAMA	.60	.84	+ 40
BAY RUM BOTTLE	.60	.83	+ 38.3
FLORIDA WATER BOTTLE	.60	.60	
WITCH HAZEL HUMPHREY'S 236 ml. HUMPHREY'S PHARMACAL IND., NEW JERSEY, USA	.70	1.15	+ 64
ANDREW'S SALT EFFERVESCENT SEALED ENVELOPE	.05	.05	
ENO FRUIT SALT SEALED ENVELOPE	.06	.05	* - 16.6
EPSON SALT SEALED ENVELOPE	.06	.10	+ 66
SALT PICOOT	.05		
MAGNESIA PHILLIPS	.35	.45 oz.	+ 28.5
CASTORIA BOTTLE	.85	.90	+ 5.8

*Reduction in size or quantity.

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE	US\$		PERCENT VARIATION 1977-1980
	JUL. 1977	FEB. 1980	
HELMITOL TABLET SEALED FOR URINARY TRACK LABORATORIOS BAYER DE CENTRO AMERICA, EL SALVADOR			
CARMINATE JAYNE'S BOTTLE		.10	
SYRUP HYPOPHOSPHITE BOTTLE		.85	
NERVITA DE HUXLEY BOTTLE ETNA CHEMICAL CO., INC., NEW YORK, USA		.95	
TONIC WINE OF BEER & IRON	.90	1.60	
TONIC VIGORON BOTTLE 180cc STERLING PRODUCTS, INTERNATIONAL, S. A.	1.85	1.75	* - 5.4
TONIC BAYER BOTTLE 100 ml. LABORATORIOS BAYER DE CENTRO AMERICA, EL SALVAODR		1.80	
DEFORMER PADRAX POWDER SEALED ENVELOPE		.10	
PEPTOBISMOL		.35 oz.	
FOMADE FOR THE HAIR	.21	.20	* - 4.7
BLADE RAZOR GILLETT	.06	.06	
PASTE TOOTH	.25	.50	+ 100
COMBS PLASTIC	.32	.10	* - 68.7
THREAD SPOOL	.09	.13	+ 44
NEEDLES PACK	.20	.23	+ 15
UNDERSHIRT MALE	1.05	1.28	+ 23
UNDERPANTS MALE	1.25	1.80	+ 44
SOCKS MALE	.75	.95	+ 26
BELT MALE	2.00	2.75	+ 37.5
NOTEBOOK WIDELINED 200 pp. CUADERNOS ESCOLARES, S.A., PANAMA	.30	.45	+ 50
BALLPOINT PEN	.30	.25	* - 16.6
PENCIL CARBON		.09	
LAMP KEROSENE GLASS TUBE	.80	.80	
BRUSH LAUNDRY	.45	.45	
MACHETE (BUSHKNIIFE) CORNETA 24 in., IMACSA, EL SALVADOR	2.15	2.45	+ 13.9
FILE	1.15	1.40	+ 21.7
NAILS 2 in..	.73	.83 lb.	+ 13.6
NAILS 3 in.	.78	.88 lb.	+ 12.8
NAILS 4 in.	.73	.83 lb.	+ 13.6
WIRE BARBED ROLL 300 m	25.00	35.00	+ 40

*Reduction in size or quantity.

US\$	JUL.	FEB.	PERCENT VARIATION
	1977	1980	1977-1980
	1.85	2.00	+ 8
	.20	.21	+ 5
	.20	.20	
	2.25	2.50	+11
		.80	

DESCRIPTION OF MERCHANDISE

NEGUUVON (TO BATHE CATTLE, PROTECTS AGAINST FLIES AND WORMS) CAN

ARCINIPUR SEALED TABLET TO FATTEN CATTLE

FRESCOSO (PURGE FOR CATTLE)

WEEDKILLER 1 lt.

INSECTICIDE - PELLETS FOR ANTS 1/4 lb.

APPENDIX VII

SYMBOLIC NAMES OF CONGO PLAYERS

Female Players

Macé~Necé~Micé (*María Merced* = Mary of Mercy, the Queen)
Ravellín (*Revellín* = Ravelin, the lead singer)
Calebra (*Culebra* = Snake)
Cundulilla (*Candelilla* = Fire Ant)
Fabiana (*Fabiana* = Fabian, inflected for feminine gender)
Llaronga (*Llorona* = Wailer)
Minina (*Mi Niña* = My Girl)
Macha (*Macho* = Male, collective name for all women)

Male Players

Juan de Dioso~Barachate (*Juan de Dios~Borrachote* = John of God~Drunkard, the King)
Juan de Diosito~Barachatite (*Juan de Dios Chiquito~Borrachito* = Little John of God~Little Drunkard, training role for lead male player)
Aravino (*Adivino* = Diviner)
Burucuntoo (*Barre-con-Todo* = Sweeps-All)
Caraxao (*Colorado* = Red)
Chuva (*Chivo* = Goat)
Cujalla (*Caballo* = Horse, collective name for the drummers)
Cweye (*Conejo* = Paca, a rodent)
Curudilla (*Coloradilla* = Red Bug)
Frastero (*Forrastero* = Stranger)
Gullunazo (*Gallinazo* = Buzzard)
Gurupata (*Garrapata* = Tick)
Habrado (*Hablador* = Talker)
Joroprango~Juruprango (*Aeroplano* = Airplane)
Maca-Maca (*Masca-Masca* = Chew-Chew)
Mancella (*Doncella* = Maiden)
Mamao (*Venado* = Deer)
Meñeque (*Meñique* = Little Finger)
Marajencia (*Diligencia* = Business Errand)
Mema-Mema (*Lleva-Lleva* = Take-Take)
Mundución~Mandación (*Maldición* = Damnation)
Monkt (*Monkt* = Monkey)
Mutuanga (*Matuanga* = Old, Sick Man of the Woods)
Prabo (*Pavo* = Turkey)
Pujurete (*Pajarito* = Birdie; flag bearer)

Purucinga (*Polista* = Police)
Rulámpago (*Relámpago* = Lightning)
Trayana ~ Troyano (*Troyano* = Captain Cristobal Troyano de Leon)
Trepautene (*Trepa-Usted* = Climb-You, the interpreter)
Tugrillo (*Tigrillo* = Wild Cat)

Nengre (*Negros* = Negroes) Collective name by which the players call themselves. They emphatically refuse to be called *Congro* (*Congo*), which they say is a fish. The term is generally applied to the male players.

Marané ~ Bajamundo (*Holandés ~ Vagabundo* = Dutch ~ Vagabond) Collective name for ordinary men who are not ritual players and who tease the players.

NOTE: This is a collective list of names during the ritual *Congo* seasons in 1979 and 1980 at the *Playero pueblos* of Boca de Río Indio, Gobeá, and Miguel de la Borda, in the Lower Coast of north-central Panamá. All names do not occur in each settlement. Other names have been reported for the Upper Coast in northeastern Panamá (Drolet, Patricia Lund 1980).

APPENDIX VIII

LEGAL PERMIT TO ENACT THE PLAY OF THE CONGOS

REPUBLICA DE PANAMA
PROVINCIA DE COLON

NUMERO _____



MUNICIPIO DE DONOSO
CORREGIDURIA DE RIO INDIO
COLON, R. DE P.

19 DE ENERO DE 1979

El Subscrito Corregidor de Rio Indio le pide
un permiso para efectuar el Juego de Congos en
esta Comunidad, al Sr. Luis Antonio Martinez
Dilectado en documento por el Sr. Arce Alvarado
Embajador de el Sr. Arce Alvarado de Rio
Indio, de acuerdo a las leyes de la Republica, se
permite ser provisionalmente hasta que se haya
dado cuenta, Embajado a la Ley de la Republica

En fe de autenticidad
Catalino Mendoza
Corregidor de Rio Indio



REPUBLIC OF PANAMA
Province of Colon
Municipality of Donoso
Magistrate of Rio Indio
Colon, R. of P.

Number _____
19 of January of 1979

The undersigned, Magistrate of Rio Indio, extends a permit to effect
the Play of the Congo in this community to Mr. Luis Antonio Martinez.
This document was requested by the aforementioned person, committing him-
self to maintain the instituted order according to the national laws.
This permit will be temporary until it has been duly channeled through
the Mayor's Office.

Yours truly,

s/ Catalino Mendoza
Magistrate of Police
(Stamped Seal)

APPENDIX IX

GLOSSARY OF SPANISH TERMS

antropóloga: Anthropologist; inflected in Spanish for the female gender.

asentamiento campesino: A planned agricultural settlement of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and the Agrarian Reform in Panamá.

asunto social: Social affairs; refers to festive activities.

anta: A festive work party; also known as *junta*.

bajo: Lowland; a natural depression in the topography of the land.

bordón (pl. *bordones*): Staff (staves) to hold for support; reference term for the youngest child or children who support the old-aged parents among the *Naturales*.

campesino(a)(s): Countryman, countrywoman, countryfolk; peasant(s).

Carnavalito: Little Carnival on the weekend following Carnival or the Shrovetide.

Central Istmeña de Trabajadores: Isthmian Central of Laborers.

cerro: Hill; low elevated mountain.

chicle: The latex of the *nispero* (*Achras zapota* L.) tree, collected as a cash crop in the Lower Coast during the first quarter of the 20th century.

chicha: Homebrew made from corn and sugar cane syrup, usually allowed to ferment, but also drunk unfermented.

Chiricanos: People from the southwestern Pacific province of Chiriquí; commonly abbreviated as *Chiri* among the *Naturales*; one of the groups of migrant *Interioranos*.

Chocó: Indian population in southeastern Panamá including two major groups--the *Wounana* and the *Emberá*--who have migrated into Panamá from Colombia.

Cholo: Straight-haired or acculturated Indian; commonly used in a pejorative sense.

- Cholos Coclesanos*: Indigenous countryfolk from the Coclé province.
- Cholos Penonoméños*: Indigenous countryfolk from Penonomé, a socio-economic center for the *Cholos* of the northern mountains of Coclé; synonymous with *Cholos Coclesanos*.
- comadre*: Term of address and reference used by the parents of a child for the godmother of a child baptized in the Catholic Church; denotes a relation of ritual co-parenthood.
- compadrazgo*: The relation between the parents and godparents of a child baptized in the Catholic Church, thus forming a ritual co-parenthood.
- Congos*: Ritual players of the "Play of the *Congos*," an Afro-American tradition enacted annually by the *Playeros* in the Lower Coast.
- Corregidor*: Government official in charge of a *Corregimiento*, a political subdivision, who receives a monthly salary for services in the collection of taxes, the administration of fines, the registration of property, the registration of vital statistics, and the issuance of permits.
- Corregimiento*: A political subdivision under the control of a *Corregidor*, whose functions are described above.
- Costa Abajo*: Lower Coast, a region in the Atlantic slope of north-central Panamá, between the Caribbean shoreline on the north and the Continental Divide on the south, the Chagres river on the east and the Belén river on the west.
- Costa Arriba*: Upper Coast, a region in the northeastern Atlantic side of Panamá, from the Caribbean shoreline on the north to the Continental Divide on the south, and from San Blas Point on the east to María Chiquita on the west.
- Cuna*: One of the major Indian groups in Panamá. Most of the contemporary *Cuna* population resides in the San Blas Archipelago of northeastern Panamá. A smaller population still resides in the southeastern Pacific side of Panamá which the *Cuna* controlled in pre-Columbian times and from where they were displaced during Spanish colonialism. Many *Cuna* men from San Blas migrate as wage laborers to other areas in Panamá.
- echado afuera*: "Thrown outside," idiomatic expression of the *Naturales* to refer to the treatment usually given to middle children to lead a career that is not directly related to the primary production of food and usually implies formal schooling.
- Emberá*: One of the two major subdivisions of the *Chocó* Indians in southeastern Panamá. The other subdivision includes the *Wounana*.
- fagina*: Dialectic variation of *faena*, meaning "task," and refers to the communal labor among the *Naturales* to cut vegetation at a nucleus of a settlement, the main trails leading to the nucleus, and at the cemetery; most commonly done in preparation for a feast day.
- familiares*: "Familiars," mythological little black dwarfs that perform extraordinary labor tasks in amazingly short periods of time for people who have relations with the Devil; a myth narrated by the *Playeros* of the Lower Coast.

Federación Nacional Campesina (F.E.N.A.C.); National Federation of Country-folk.

fiesta de calle: "Street feast," those events during a patronal festival that include sports, song duels, the sale and drinking of alcoholic beverages, the sale and eating of special foods, and dancing.

fiesta del padre: "Priest's feast," the events during a patronal festival that include the mass, baptisms, marriages, a procession, and a fair.

gente de afuera: "People of the outside," in this case "outside" connotes an area external to the Atlantic region of the Lower Coast and usually refers to the Pacific south-central and southwestern provinces.

gente del campo: People of the countryside.

gente de pueblo: Town's people.

granjería: Vending stand of cooked food done by Afro-American women among the *Playeros*; it can refer to the ambulatory sale of cooked food also done by these women.

Herreranos: People from the Pacific province of Herrera in the Azuero Peninsula; one of the groups of migrant *Interioranos*.

Interioranos: "People from the *Interior*," a region in the Pacific side of Panamá, including the south-central and southwestern provinces. These people are migrants into the Atlantic Lower Coast of north-central Panamá, the northeastern Upper Coast, and the southeastern provinces of Panamá and Darién.

jibre: A ritual-play word of the *Congos* that means "river." It is not etymologically based in Spanish, but may refer to the *jiwe* of the Calabars of West Africa and that means "monkey," and to the Cubanism *jigüe* that refers to little black hairy dwarfs that come out of the river.

junta: A festive work party, also known as *cunta*.

Junta Católica: A Catholic Committee in charge of organizing a patronal festival.

Junta Comunal: Under the 1972 Constitution of Panamá, a committee of representatives from the settlements in a *Corregimiento*.

Junta Local: The community level organization that represents the lowest political level according to the 1972 Constitution of Panamá.

lucha: Struggle, idiomatically used in Panamá to mean "daily living."

maestro curioso: "Curious teacher," that is, medicine man who uses prayer formulas as part of the curing process.

(*El*) *Maló*: (The) Devil; (The) Evil One; *diábulo*, "devil," is usually avoided

as a direct reference term by the *Naturales*.

Marané: A ritual-play word of the *Congos* that has undergone nasalization and vowel substitution from the basic Spanish word *Holandés*= Dutch, and used as a term of address and reference for any ordinary man who is not a ritual player and teases the players.

mejoras: "Improvements," and practices, at a living and agricultural site, to include such things as houses, cash crops, cattle pastures, extension of land worked by swidden agriculture, fruit groves, and boats.

milperos: Swidden agriculturalists in Guatemala and Mexico.

mola: Artistic, reverse appliqué cloth panel, designed and sewn by *Cuna* Indian women for their blouses and to sell to tourists.

montaña: Little mountain, a large sea cliff.

montuno: A derogatory term used by urbanites against countryfolk and that implies the backwardness and ignorance of the countryfolk.

morro: Headland, a small sea cliff.

nance: The fruit of the tree *Brysonima crassifolia*, eaten in the form of beverages and puddings.

Naturales: Indigenous people who have undergone Spanish acculturation but limited miscegenation with Europeans and Afro-Americans. It is a reference term of respect used by the Afro-Hispanic *Playeros* of the littoral zone in the Caribbean region of the Lower Coast of Panamá for the inland people of the mountainous zone in this region. It contrasts with the derogatory term of reference *Cholos*.

Negociante: Business entrepreneur.

Nengre: Ritual-play word of the *Congos* and that has undergone nasalization and vowel substitution from the basic Spanish term *Negro* = Negro, Black.

nimi-nimi: Ritual-play word of the *Congos* for "food;" a reduplicated variant of the West African and Caribbean Creole *njam* = to eat.

nispero: The tree *Achras zapota* L., also known as *chicle*, whose latex was used to make sweet gum and was a commercial cash product in the Lower Coast during the first quarter of the 20th century.

Organización Internacional de Trabajadores: International Organization of Laborers.

(La) *Padra*: (The) Priestess, leader of a nativistic movement in the 1960s among the *Naturales* of the Lower Coast; preached at site of Teriá.

patriota: "Patriot," common reference term for the *Gross Michele* variety

of banana of the United Fruit Company.

Playeros: "People of the beach;" it is a reference term of respect used by the inland, mountainous, *Naturales* of the Lower Coast for the Afro-Hispanic people who reside in the littoral zone of this region.

plaza: An open space where people gather for special events at a nucleus of the *Naturales* or a *pueblo* of the *Playeros*; usually refers to the open space in front of a chapel or church.

portete: Small port, a cove in the shoreline.

pre-asentamiento: A trial agricultural settlement planned by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agrarian Reform in Panamá.

prestamista: One who has a cattle loan from a bank.

principales: An extended kin network that is credited with introducing improvements at the nucleus of a settlement of *Naturales* in the Lower Coast; synonymous with "founders."

profesora: Professor, inflected for the female gender; a term of address of respect.

Promoción de la Mujer Campesina: Development of the Countrywoman. A program initiated in 1976 by the Claretian missionary priests; suspended in 1978; reinstituted in 1979.

pueblecillo: Little village or little town; used by some *Naturales* to refer to the nucleus of their settlement where the community symbols are located--the primary public school, a retail store, and a Catholic chapel.

pueblo: Town and/or village.

pueblo de indios: Indian village or Indian town; usually referred to a town founded by the Spaniards to control Indians in the surrounding area.

puercos brujos: "Witch hogs," refers to a black market of pork meat from rural to urban areas, sold at a lower cost than the official price controls and outside the municipal markets to networks of kin, neighbors, and coworkers in the urban area.

puesto: Living and agricultural site.

Regiduría: A political subdivision under a *Regidor*, a tax collector and a magistrate of peace and order, who receives a commission from taxes and fines in payment for the services rendered.

quebrada: Stream.

respaldantes: Supporters; reference term for the children who live and work with their parents in an extended family unit among the *Naturales*.

sapo: Toad, an idiomatic term used for a government spy.

Segundo Dios: Second God, leader of a nativistic movement among the *Naturales* in the Lower Coast during the first quarter of the 20th century. His real name was Segundo Sánchez. His "ark," as he called the settlement that he founded and that was enclosed with a fence of crosses, was located at the site of "U" by the river "U".

siembra de escuelas: "Planting of schools," a program of the Ministry of Education of Panamá and the United States Agency for International Development in building primary schools in rural areas in the 1960s-'70s.

sombrero de junco: A plain straw hat usually made from the stem of the *junco* (*Cyperus giganteus*). It is considered a working hat because it does not get moldy with the rains. It was the only type of hat recommended by *La Padra* (The Priestess) for the *Naturales* to wear during her nativistic movement in the early 1960s.

sombrero pintado: "Painted" hat, usually made from the straw of the Panama hat palm (*Carludovica palmata*) in two colors: the bleached straw and the black straw dyed with natural or synthetic dyes. Countryfolk usually wear it on feast days or when travelling to urban centers. *La Padra* (The Priestess) forbade the *Naturales* to wear it during her nativistic movement in the 1960s, as the black signs represented evil.

Santeños: People from the province of Los Santos; one of the major groups of migrant *Interioranos*.

tiempos de valimiento: "Times of value," an idiomatic phrase used in the Lower Coast by *Naturales* and *Playeros* to refer to cash booms.

tratos de negocio: Business transactions; *tratar*, the verb, in itself is used to refer to any negotiation process.

Veraguenses: People from the province of Veraguas; included among the migrant *Interioranos*.

vidajena: Busybody, snoop, a term commonly applied in Panamá to researchers who administer questionnaires.

(La) *Zona*: (The) Zone; the former Panamá Canal Zone. In the Lower Coast the term was also used to refer to retail stores that were supplied by the Rubber Reserve Chicle Company, of Washington, D. C., through the Panamá Railroad-Panamá Canal commissaries, during the second rubber boom in the 1940s.

Wamana: One of the two major subdivisions of the *Chocó* Indians in southeastern Panamá. The other subdivision includes the *Emberá*.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

After 18 years of marriage without children, I was born on April 10, 1945 to Graciela Isabel Adames de Joly and Manuel Dolores Joly Echeona. They expected me to be the light of their lives and therefore named me *Luz* (light) and *Graciela* in my mother's honor. Although I was an only child, I was not spoiled by my parents. Since they both had chronic vascular-coronary illnesses by the time I was born, my parents made me aware very young that they could die and that I should learn to fend for myself in life.

From birth and until I was 28 years old, I lived with my parents in the same apartment that we rented in a 4-family building in Colón, the Atlantic terminal of the Panamá Canal. This is a crowded one-square-mile port town, inhabited and visited by people of diverse physical and socio-cultural backgrounds. My family, for example, includes Indian, Afro-American, Spanish, French, Italian, and who knows what else! I was brought into interaction very early with various people in town through the respected position that my parents had in town. My mother was a public school teacher for 20 years; my father a businessman, politician, and public official. Both of them retired on disability shortly after I was born and their health limited their community life, but nevertheless they remained active enough for me to learn and appreciate how to interact with peoples of all sorts.

From age 5 and during 13 years of training at a private, business, Catholic school, I interacted with Vincentian missionary priests from the United States, Swiss nuns, Panamanian lay female teachers, and with fellow female students from various socio-cultural backgrounds. The nuns talked in German among themselves but taught and disciplined us in English, which became a second language for most of the students who like me were native Spanish speakers. The Panamanian lay teachers taught Spanish grammar, literature, and Panamanian history during one hour a day. While in high school, I was active in the school's missionary program.

Alumni from Saint Mary's Academy in Colón had a reputation of being excellent bilingual secretaries in English and Spanish and accountants and were eagerly sought for employment. At age 17, I began working as a secretary, a month prior to my high school graduation in January 1963. By age 19, I had become the first Panamanian and the first person under age 25 to be a high-speed reporting stenographer for hearings of marine accident investigations in the Panamá Canal. Working with sea people from all over the world was exciting and challenging, and I worked for the Panama Canal Company for 12 years. It was a challenge because I wanted to prove, after demanding equal recognition in title and pay, that I, as a Panamanian, could perform equally as well, if not better, than the United States stenographers.

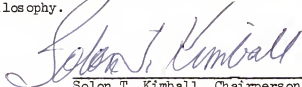
Working as a maritime reporting stenographer required me to be on call 24-hours a day and work long overtime hours. Nevertheless, I made the time to attend evening college courses first at the branch of the University of Panamá in Colón and later at The Florida State University branch in the

Panama Canal area. Since early adolescence, I had longed for a college education to become a teacher like my mother and a public servant like my father. However, I needed to earn money to help my parents who had limited disability pensions and whose savings had been depleted by my father's long recovery after a severe heart attack that he suffered when I was age five. He died of a second heart attack when I was twenty-one.

Attending evening college courses was an experience that not only broadened my mind, but brought me in contact with several scholars who had a genuine interest in the ecology of Panamá--people, flora, fauna, land, and water. Through a series of field trips during the 10 years (1964-1974) that it took me to complete my baccalaureate of science in anthropology at The Florida State University, I was exposed to various ecological habitats on the Isthmus--from the highest volcano to the underwater coral reefs--and to people living in hamlets, villages, towns, and cities all over the Isthmus. As a charter member and officer of the FSU Isthmian Anthropology Society, I also participated in various activities to promote knowledge about peoples and places in Panamá and Latin America, and assisted various anthropologists from the United States and elsewhere who went to work in Panamá.

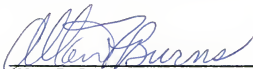
When I was 28, I decided to let my mother rest after being unconscious for 13 months from a stroke. After she died, I left Colón, moved to Panamá City for two years to complete my baccalaureate, and decided to use my savings to continue graduate studies in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Fl., from 1976 to 1981. The training in academic and applied anthropology that I have received at the University of Florida will be used to study about, teach about, and work not only with my people in my favorite tropical habitat on earth--Panamá--but also wherever my professional services may be required.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Solon T. Kimball, Chairperson
Graduate Research Professor
of Anthropology Emeritus

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Allan F. Burns
Assistant Professor
of Anthropology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Anthony Oliver-Smith
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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Anita Spring
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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Anthropology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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